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EDITORIAL

S.W.P.'S DAY IN COURT

The $264,000 in damages that Federal District Judge Thomas Griesa awarded the Socialist Workers Party to compensate for eighteen years of government harassment is miniscule compared with all the money the F.B.I. poured into its COINTELPRO activities against the S.W.P. Judge Griesa noted that over the years the Bureau had paid some $1.7 million to 300 S.W.P. members and 1,000 informers to be disruptive, invasive and subversive. All in all, it amounted to a domestic *contra* operation against a "lawful and peaceful" political organization, he said, for no reason other than its ideological orientation.

If the government's security forces did not actually keep the S.W.P. alive during those years, they certainly did create and exaggerate the threat that they then campaigned to eliminate. The broader radical movements of the period, which did pose some danger to the stability of the system, were too anarchic and evanescent to respond to the F.B.I.'s methods of subversion. The S.W.P., however, maintained a familiar institutional structure, which was vulnerable to infiltration. If it did not exist in that form, the F.B.I. would surely have invented it, for the national security state needs identifiable domestic threats against which its power can be tested and deployed.

The Socialist Workers Party bore the brunt of government blows to progressive politics over the past two decades, and it has won a valuable moral victory. For the first time the F.B.I.'s disruptions, surreptitious entries and use of informers have been found unconstitutional. But when the government damages one area of legitimate political activity, it injures democracy as a whole, and everyone suffers. For that, relief will come not only in the courts but in a renewal and expansion of political action.

MALTA: FREE AT LAST
Christopher Hitchens

RELAXING RADIATION STANDARDS
Brian Jacobs

LETTER FROM PERU
Lucy Komisar

COSMIC POETRY
Douglas Crase

FRANZ KLINE RECONSIDERED
Arthur C. Danto

BOB DYLAN IN CONCERT
Billy Altman

THE OFFSHORE MONEY

SWISS BANKS STILL SELL SECRECY

MARK SCHAPIRO

Lausanne, Switzerland

Switzerland has long served as a magnet for the money of wealthy foreigners who perceive the world as buffeted by over-taxation, over-regulation and political turmoil. They are attracted, of course, by the confidentiality and discretion that have been a hallmark of Swiss bankers since the French Revolution, when they offered financial refuge to French aristocrats. In 1934 secrecy was enshrined into law, and a Swiss banker can now go to jail for revealing the identity of an account holder.

Banking in Switzerland, a land of few natural resources, has been immensely lucrative. Operating in a country less than half the size of Maine, Swiss banks control more than $400 billion in assets, making the country the third-largest financial center in the world. Recently, however, a siege mentality has developed among bankers here. The government's decision to freeze the accounts of Ferdinand Marcos and Jean-Claude Duvalier signaled a sharp break with the past, when the assets of deposed dictators, such as the Shah of Iran, were left untouched. "Under the pretext of morality without compromise," the bankers warned after the action against Marcos, "the government degrades our financial image and risks compromising our prosperity and development."

In addition, Switzerland faces twin challenges from abroad: competition from other offshore banking centers, like the Bahamas, Panama and Austria; and growing pressure from the U.S. government. Swiss bankers fear that the price of their increasing participation in American

(*Continued on Page 178*)

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LETTERS.

CULTURAL THAW IN MOSCOW

Woburn, Mass.

Herbert Mitgang's August 2/9 article, "Jay Gatsby Meets the Russians," provides a revealing portrait of Soviet literary conservatives. Without further elaboration, however, it simply reinforces the familiar misconception that only dissident Soviet writers produce worthwhile literature while the works of all "official" authors are compromised and trite. In fact, many Soviet writers have managed to carve out a significant space for creative endeavor in that vast wilderness of formula *khaltura*, or schlock.

The antimilitarist war novels of former *frontoviki* (frontline soldiers) like Vasil Bykov, Grigorii Baklanov and Ales Adamovich have often been branded as Remarquesque by their more conservative colleagues for their brutal realism and insistence on maintaining a grunt's-eye view of events. Instead of using war lore to bolster conformist Soviet patriotism, these authors use the prosaic experiences of those who eat the dirt and do the bleeding to cultivate a hatred of war among their readers—as the exceptional Leningrad writer Daniil Granin described his literary vocation. Yet this aesthetically and politically important literary genre has gone virtually unreported in the West. In other realms, one can point to the critical feminist perspective of Irina Grekova, Natalia Baranskaia and Svetlana Alexeevich; the demands for greater rural cooperative democracy in the village prose of Boris Mozhaev and Ivan Vasiliev; and the progressive ethnic pride of minority writers like Chingiz Aitmatov and Olzhas Suleimenov. This brief list of authors represents only a fraction of the official intelligentsia that has managed to keep alive a sense of civil courage and public morality through the Brezhnevian gilded age when most of the Soviet elite was content to line up at the trough after checking their social conscience at the door.

The publication of Iurii Bondarev's novel *The Game* was the single most important Soviet literary event of last year. This work by a pillar of the literary establishment, a sort of Soviet Herman Wouk with greater intellectual depth, takes us behind the monolithic facade defended by Georgy Markov, former head of the Soviet Writers' Union. The dialogue between the main character, a much honored Soviet filmmaker, and his sympathetically portrayed American counterpart, illustrates the crisis of social conscience considered to be at the root of the malaise presently gripping Soviet society.

The novel is not great literature by any stretch of the imagination but it is a political document of the same caliber as Ilya Ehrenburg's *The Thaw* or Vladimir Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone*. Bondarev breaks new ground by tracing the current crisis to the existence of a symbiotic relationship between self-serving political establishments in both East and West—that global confederation of "timeservers" and "conformists." This may not be Tolstoy, Twain or even Vidal but it is an age removed from the Manichaean schemata of a Markov.

Gliterati like Bondarev can rely on their exalted stature to protect them from reprisals if the political tide turns against the reformists. The real measure of this latest upsurge in civic conscience is the candor of so many lesser lights who are putting their careers on the line when they speak out. At the Writers' Congress last June, Katherine Sheveliova invoked the memory of the liberal literary champion of the 1960s, Alexander Tvardovskii, to ask whether "Chernobyl did not grow out of the same root system in which schlock literature, incompetence, money-grubbing, obsequiousness, corruption and official mistakes are all intertwined." This root-and-branch criticism coming from a hitherto nondescript veteran poet may provide the best illustration of the depth of outrage and political momentum gathering behind this latest reform drive.

The same radical political critique is evident in the columns of literary reviewers who openly ask how much longer both nuclear giants can go on practicing old-fashioned power politics without inviting mutual annihilation. The ominous growls of conservatives about anarchy and a return of the dissident plague serve to underscore Yevgeny Yevtushenko's cautionary pun that the hard right would covet the chance to transform this *perelom* (historical turning point) into the *kostolomnoe* (bone breaking) of a cultural pogrom. The present knot of interlocking unresolved problems appears too urgent and intricate to be shunted aside or muscled through. There is no guarantee of an affirmative outcome, but the openings for the rise of a democratic socialist left are once again materializing after a twenty-year hiatus.

"Official" Soviet literature has a significance beyond the aesthetic because it offers rare glimpses into the changing mentality of influential segments of Soviet society. I suggest that *The Nation* consider the possibility of publishing a quarterly column on the official literature of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, written by authorities who possess the expertise to squeeze the most out of sources like Bondarev's novel. The entire American left would benefit from some flesh and blood being drawn over our largely skeletal conception of Soviet civilization.

Patrick Flaherty

CULTURAL FREEZE AT HOME

Chicago

I wish to add a comment to Alexander Cockburn's articulate, perceptive and long-overdue observations on the Liberty celebration ["Beat the Devil," July 19/26]. I find it bitterly appropriate that a celebration that pretended that all U.S. citizens have ancestors who came willingly and freely through Ellis Island, thus excluding nearly all people of color from the event, should be capped off by a musical revue featuring a chorus line of Elvis Presley impersonators. Presley, of course, has come to symbolize the rapacious cultural imperialism of the United States entertainment industry. Nearly all of his act—physical and vocal mannerisms as well as many of his most popular hits—was stolen directly from black blues and rhythm and blues artists, none of whom received any pay or royalties for what had been appropriated from them. It seems that a critical understanding of our cultural history is simply beyond the capacity of our mass media, which profit so greatly by promoting watered-down versions of what was once a true people's art form. Given the mindless, masturbatory self-congratulation that characterized the entire weekend, the Elvis Presley revue was entirely fitting, both as lesson and spectacle.

David G. Whiteis

COCKBURN MISLEADING

New York City

Alexander Cockburn's reference to a piece Thomas Friedman did for us is seriously misleading and unfair to Friedman ["Beat the Devil," July 19/26]. The Friedman piece was about the Shin Bet and Pollard cases and what they revealed about Israel. From the dispatch, Cockburn quoted the following sentence, out of context: "The manner in which the two men were treated also reflected the fact that Israel in many ways is a very informal, young, frontier democracy where there is a tendency to cut corners in the rush to get things done."

Suggesting that "the two men" referred to in the sentence are the two Palestinian hijackers killed by Israeli security agents, Cockburn accuses Friedman of "deplorable" standards. But to anyone reading the Friedman piece it is clear that "the two men" are not the two who were killed, but rather Rafael Eitan and Avraham Shalom. That makes Friedman's meaning far different from what Cockburn suggests.

William Borders
The New York Times

RIVERA'S SPONSOR

Detroit

Arthur C. Danto's sensitive review of the Diego Rivera exhibit in Philadelphia describes beautifully the work of the great revolutionary muralist ["Art," July 19/26].

Linda Downs, curator of education at the Detroit Institute of Art, nurtured the institute's interest in Rivera over the years and,

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EDITORIALS.

Superpower Games

Two days after the Russians shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007 on August 31, 1983, President Reagan proclaimed that the action demanded "a truthful accounting of facts." During the days that followed, he maintained that there was no way the Russians "could mistake this for anything other than a civilian airliner." Afterward, the White House Press Office repeatedly said there was "irrefutable" evidence proving that the Russians had identified Flight 007 as a civilian airliner before destroying it. Rather than a truthful accounting, these were lies, and new information shows that the Administration knew it. Yet the Administration held fast to this line, for it was bent on inflaming cold war passions to make it easier to deploy cruise and Pershing 2 missiles in a restless Western Europe, to shore up support in Congress for the beleaguered MX missile and, most important, to reinforce the hard-line Reagan position in the upcoming presidential election.

The lie—long suggested by others who have covered the downing [see "K.A.L. 007: What the U.S. Knew and When We Knew It," by David Pearson, *The Nation,* August 18/25, 1984]—has now been exposed by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh, in an article in *The Atlantic Monthly.* After a two-year investigation into the flight and downing of K.A.L. 007, Hersh has come forward with his own theory about what happened that night. The plane was not on a spy mission, he states; rather, it flew off course

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because of a chain of flight crew errors.

Maybe Hersh's theory is right, but there is still room for investigation. (We await David Pearson's book, scheduled to be published next year, and a long-rumored Thames Television follow-up to its original report, among others.) What seems beyond dispute is that the Reagan Administration knowingly lied for political purposes. Hersh reports that the consensus among the U.S. intelligence community was that Flight 007 was mistakenly identified by the Russians as a U.S. intelligence plane. Both the National Security Agency and the Air Force's Electronic Security Command, according to Hersh, found that the Soviet Air Defense Force "was convinced it was dealing with an American reconnaissance plane"—one whose flight path the Russians knew too well. The reason? "for years, the United States has been routinely flying reconnaissance missions . . . around the southern tip of Kamchatka and into the Sea of Okhotsk." But Congress and the American public were never told this, for to do so would undermine the propaganda victory the Reagan Administration eagerly sought.

Once Reagan, William Casey and George Shultz had decided how to play the story, Hersh reports, they "chose to look the other way when better information became available about the Soviet confusion with the longstanding American reconnaissance missions." The truth "would raise doubts about all that the United States had said after the shootdown about the impossibility of mistaking Flight 007 for an American spy plane."

Whether Flight 007 was lost or spying, the cover-up Hersh reveals is shocking. One superpower acts incompetently; the other cynically conceals the truth. The Reagan Administration's attempt to reap political advantage from the disaster at the cost of disrupting arms control negotiations and poisoning already delicate East-West relations ranks as a new low in the politics of demagoguery. Through its political gamesmanship, the Administration edged the world to the brink of crisis. As Hersh writes, "The world may not be so lucky next time."

Green Politics

From town councils to the highest national offices, Democratic Party politics is grouping again around two poles: one flying the standard of mass political participation, reform and equity; the other trumpeting allegiance to corporate expansion, institutional stability and national power. The struggle has been continuing for years, but Reaganism's assault on liberalism has sharpened the lines and heightened its importance. It's no exaggeration to say that the future of the party through this century will depend on the standing of its progressive and corporate wings after the elections of the next two years.

A harbinger of that contest has been heard this summer in New York State, where the two candidates for the Senate, Mark Green and John Dyson, both typify and express the opposing tendencies in Democratic politics. Green, who headed Ralph Nader's Congress Watch for two decades and who is a valued member of *The Nation*'s extended family of friends and contributors, is waging an underfunded but aggressive campaign for the seat held by Republican Alfonse D'Amato, a stalwart of the Reagan right. Early on, Green decided to refuse all PAC contributions and to rely on support from the coalition of liberals, minorities, progressive unionists, conservationists and anti-interventionists who represent Democratic populism at its best. Green's opponent has outspent him seven to one (nearly all of his $4 million war chest has been filled from his own bulging pockets), and the message of his campaign is essentially about money and power. With traditional ties to nuclear utilities, the state Conservative Party and the local corporate elite, Dyson would restrict popular participation in the affairs of the state as Green would expand it. They face each other in the Democratic primary on September 9, and its outcome will resound to the very soul of the party. For that reason we support Mark Green.

Correction Please

In the course of its campaign to win Congressional approval for aid to the *contras* the Administration did everything in its power to portray the Sandinistas as cruel oppressors. In this effort it found an ally in *The New Republic*. Several months ago, the magazine heralded the revelations of Jose Alvaro Baldizón, a Nicaraguan defector who claimed that the Managua government had murdered 2,000 political dissenters, most of them on direct orders from the Minister of the Interior or his deputy. Columnist Fred Barnes subsequently attacked those who did not accept on faith what Baldizón had said, labeling them the "Sandinista lobby." Baldizón has since been discredited; no evidence could be found to support his claims. The State Department, which paid Baldizón and published glossy reports of his lurid disclosures, now seems to have forgotten his existence.

The New Republic has never acknowledged the falsity of Baldizón's charges, or apologized to those Barnes attacked. However, its latest attempt to demonize the Sandinistas, an article by Nina H. Shea in the September 1 issue, implicitly admits that Baldizón was lying. "The Sandinistas don't go in for the ghastly death squad killings and disappearances that have been common in El Salvador and Guatemala," she writes. Instead, she says:

> Thousands of independent labor unionists, political party activists, church leaders, journalists, academics, defense attorneys, human rights activists, and others have been arrested and imprisoned for dissenting from the government, for membership and activities in lawful associations, or other political reasons.

Shea, who is program director of an organization known as the International League for Human Rights, buttresses this assertion by telling her readers:

> A representative of an international relief agency who visits

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prisoners in the national penitentiaries (where prisoners are sent after they are charged) placed the number of political prisoners being held in these cells at around 3,500—excluding 2,500 imprisoned former Somoza National Guardsmen.

Shea's effort won't work. The only international relief agency that visits prisoners in the national penitentiaries is the International Committee of the Red Cross. An obsessively secretive Swiss organization, the I.C.R.C. gains unfettered access to prisons in many countries by pledging that its findings will be presented to the authorities responsible for those prisons but will otherwise be kept confidential. I.C.R.C. representatives visit Nicaraguan penitentiaries and consider all who are charged with security-related offenses—that is, offenses ranging from peaceful dissent to armed combat—to be the committee's clientele.

As it happens, the I.C.R.C. is not quite so secretive about the number of its clients as it is about the conditions of their confinement. The most recent figures on Nicaragua, published in its June *Bulletin*, differ radically from those in Shea's story. The committee reports that its Nicaraguan clientele number "3,800 incarcerated persons," including "members of the former National Guard, captured at the time of the fall of the Somoza regime, civilians accused of collaborating with that regime or of counterrevolutionary activities or offences against the security of the State." Assuming that Shea is right about the number of imprisoned Guardsmen, the rest of the I.C.R.C.'s clientele in Nicaragua total 1,300, not 3,500. That number includes captured *contra* combatants and those validly imprisoned for collaborating with the *contras*, as well as those described by Shea as "imprisoned for dissenting from the government, for membership and activities in lawful associations, or other political reasons." It would take a case-by-case review to determine how many have been falsely accused of *contra* activity, but it isn't the "thousands" claimed by Shea, or the 3,500 she attributes to "an international relief agency. Any imprisonment for peaceful dissent is one too many, but *The New Republic*'s latest effort should be relegated to the same memory hole where the collected works of Jose Alvaro Baldizón are stored.

F. Palmer Weber

After Sidney Hillman hired him as the research director of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' PAC in 1943, F. Palmer Weber, who died last week, had dinner with a friend. "Jim Carey [secretary-treasurer of the C.I.O.] says that you're the most dangerous Red on the Eastern Seaboard," the friend told him. "Well," Palmer replied, "I feel very hurt. I've always regarded myself as the most dangerous Red in the United States."

The impact of Palmer Weber was not limited to the Eastern Seaboard. His lifelong commitment to civil rights (the burden, as he would put it, of all Southerners), civil liberties and world peace, which began in his beloved Virginia, expanded to encompass the entire country, and indeed the world. He fought for the ideas he believed in at every stage of his variegated career: as a professor of economics and philosophy at the University of Virginia; as a brain truster in the New Deal, during which he served on Senate committees concerned with immigrants, education and war mobilization; as a founder of the National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax, a founding board member of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and a member of the President's Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union; as a co-founder, with Marriner Eccles, of Businessmen Against the War in Vietnam; as an indispensable financial adviser to and savior of other progressive institutions, including *The Nation*; and as promoter of countless writers, whose books he would buy in the hundreds and spread across the land.

Actually, his politics were more red, white and blue than Red (when a friend was kicked out of the party in the 1950s, Palmer told her, "That's marvelous; they've set you free"); nevertheless, he was called before an investigative committee during the McCarthy years. Typically, he refused to genuflect to his inquisitors. As he told an interviewer from Columbia University's oral history project: "I can stand mute in front of a court or a Congressional committee or any other agency because my right to myself, to my labor, to my opinion, and to my mind, that is what constitutes freedom. That is the baseline of freedom. It is not a subject for legislation by the Congress or any other party."

And so when he was called before Senator William Jenner's committee on April 21, 1953, he refused to betray others. Instead, he lectured the panel on the meaning of Jeffersonian democracy. The ironic result was that this scholarly activist was blacklisted from government and academia and was compelled to apply to the stock market the wisdom contained in his Ph.D. dissertation on the Hegelian dialectic.

As a financial adviser and investment banker, he made fortunes for his clients, most of them fellow victims of the political purges. But if Palmer had anything to say about what they did with the money he made for them—and he usually did—they tithed regularly to worthy causes, becoming major funders of the peace and civil rights movements of the 1960s and thereafter. In headlining an interview with him in 1967 "Renaissance Man of Wall Street," *Barron's* said more than it realized.

The legacies of his energetic service in behalf of his ideals include the F. Palmer Weber Fellowship for Civil Liberties at the New York University School of Law, and the soon-to-be-christened F. Palmer Weber Fellowship at the University of Virginia's Center for the Study of Civil Rights. Over the gates to the University of Virginia is a motto that reads, "Enter by this gateway and seek the way of honor and the light of truth, the will to work for men." Weber entered that gateway and absorbed those words, supplemented by his own notions of social justice. And, like the inveterate fight fan that he was, he came out punching, and never stopped. Sad as we are that the life of our good friend is over, we are consoled by the thought that its momentum will continue far into the future.

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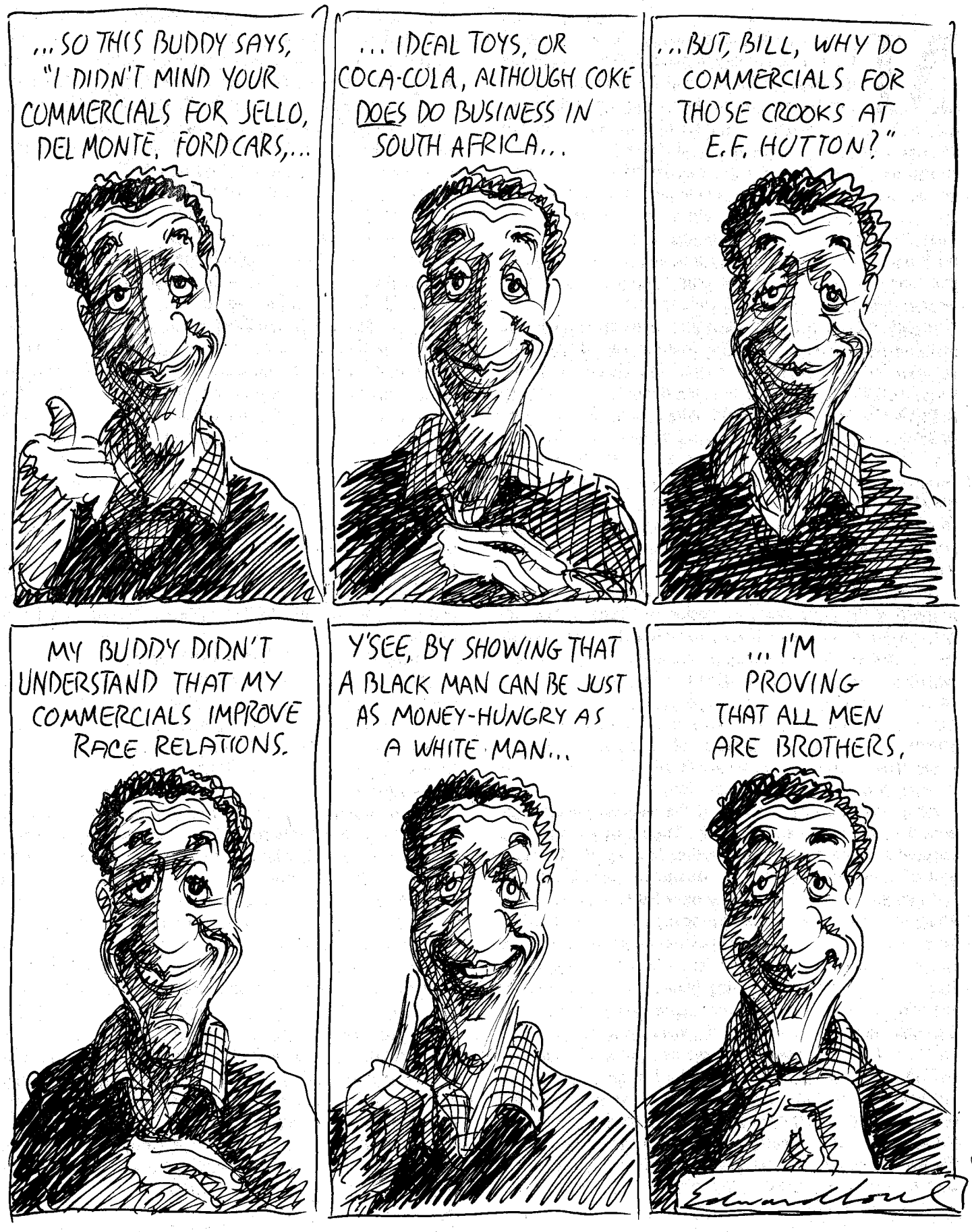
The Noble Cos

EDWARD SOREL


...SO THIS BUDDY SAYS, "I DIDN'T MIND YOUR COMMERCIALS FOR JELLO, DEL MONTE, FORD CARS,...
... IDEAL TOYS, OR COCA-COLA, ALTHOUGH COKE DOES DO BUSINESS IN SOUTH AFRICA...
...BUT, BILL, WHY DO COMMERCIALS FOR THOSE CROOKS AT E.F. HUTTON?"
MY BUDDY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THAT MY COMMERCIALS IMPROVE RACE RELATIONS.
Y'SEE, BY SHOWING THAT A BLACK MAN CAN BE JUST AS MONEY-HUNGRY AS A WHITE MAN...
... I'M PROVING THAT ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS,
Edward Sorel

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Valletta, Malta

My earliest childhood memory is of the Grand Harbor of this city, a magnificent Baroque and Renaissance fortress which still testifies to the wealth and skill of the Knights of Malta (who did, indeed, use to pay an annual rent of one falcon to Charles V of Spain). In my boyhood the entire island was a British naval and military base, secured by a colonial form of rule and used as an impregnable aircraft carrier against the emergence of Arab nationalism. The NATO powers treated Malta as if it were an uninhabited rock, instead of the home of an ancient and tenacious culture with a distinctive language—Maltese is the only Semitic tongue to be written in Latin script—and a vivid history.

In spite of their matchless resistance to an attempted Nazi invasion from 1940 to 1942, the Maltese were denied self-government in the postwar years, and shared with the Cypriots the sad distinction of being the only Europeans to live under European colonialism. Attempts to alter this state of affairs were met with every kind of repression. In 1961 the Catholic Church, which here makes its Nicaraguan counterpart appear enlightened, actually excommunicated the entire Maltese Labor Party. It became a mortal sin even to buy a Labor newspaper, and children were asked in the confessional to report on parents if they voted the wrong way.

In 1971, after an arduous struggle, the Labor Party triumphed at the polls over this version of Christian Democracy. In the intervening fifteen years it has closed the British bases, removed NATO headquarters and declared Malta a nonaligned republic. For the first time in its history the archipelago is not under the rule of foreign powers. Internally, the church's monopoly on education has been broken, and efforts toward the socialization of medicine have been made. The Maltese are no longer faced with the old choice between stultification and emigration.

Of course, all this has earned the Maltese government considerable slander and calumny. The ruling socialists are accused of being dictatorial, of selling Malta to the Russians and of being puppets of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi. The last two allegations in particular have led to a campaign of abuse in ultraright American newspapers and to a falloff in foreign investment in Malta, which has no natural resources to speak of and must live or die on trade and tourism. In effect, "strategic" Malta is being blamed for its very geography by the sort of people who regard nations as bargaining chips. Being blamed for your geography is, incidentally, a joke. Whenever you read some new piece of grandiose buffoonery about maneuvers off the Libyan coast, try to imagine how it feels to be the citizen of a tiny archipelago, anchored between Sicily and Tripoli, with no air force, navy or army worthy of note. You barely show up as "collateral damage" in the calculations of the superpowers, who are habituated to being the subject rather than the object in the pompous sentences they shout.

Libya, which is the largest Arab neighbor, gave Malta a great deal of economic help in the brave days when oil was expensive. In return, Qaddafi received various privileges, such as the right to broadcast his implausible propaganda from transmitters on the islands. But as the Maltese never tire of saying, they did not expel one master in order to acquire another. When Qaddafi turned nasty over the matter of Malta's right to explore for oil on the continental shelf, Prime Minister Dom Mintoff did not hesitate to condemn him, publicly and roundly, for his arrogance. Malta has appealed to The Hague to uphold its rights and maritime boundaries, and has suspended Libyan broadcasting permits in the meantime. This is an exercise of independence that would have been impossible under colonial rule.

The Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean is, like all other military forces, prevented from using Valletta as a base. There is, however, a "bunkering" arrangement, whereby Soviet commercial vessels may refuel here. It is said that this fuel is often transferred to the Soviet Navy once the ship is outside Malta's territorial waters, and no spokesperson for the government will deny that this is the case. As I was told: "We cannot control end-users—any more than Mr. Reagan can insure that American wheat does not feed the Red Army. But we have offered the very same refueling facilities to the United States, and could not prevent them from benefiting the Sixth Fleet." The Maltese press, which is still predominantly controlled by extreme conservative interests, can fog this distinction but it cannot completely obscure it.

During my stay, a British warship paid a courtesy call—the first since the eviction of the Royal Navy, in 1979. Large crowds turned out to greet it, causing ecstasies of sentimentality and Churchillian reminiscence among the English tax exile community and the Maltese conservatives. (And, to be honest, in my own breast: boyhood glories are hard to shake.) Among the enthusiasts was an old worker who told me, with an equal measure of pride, "We used to need their permission to use our harbors. Now they have to ask ours."

In a sane world, Malta's desire for self-determination would not be an occasion for hysteria. But the Reaganites and their clones among the European Christian Democrats are incapable of seeing the point of nonalignment. To them neutrality is a debased product of the theory of moral equivalence. I'm reminded of a famous "cultural freedom" conference held in New Delhi at the height of the first cold war. An American speaker, inveighing against Indian even-handedness, said that it was senseless to be neutral between the shepherd and the wolf. This thunderous righteousness was punctured by an Indian who pointed out mildly enough that his country had experienced many wolves in its time, and it needed no lectures on the subject. Did the American, he inquired, wish to liken the United States to the shepherd? After all, shepherds existed not to protect sheep from wolves but to arrange for their regular fleecing and butchering.

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CALVIN TRILLIN

My friend Howard Corkum took David Stockman's book to the cottage the Corkums have at the beach, and immediately started talking about how guilty he felt about not reading it.

"I feel terrible about this," Howard said, when I went out to visit them a few days after they opened up the cottage for the summer. "Here I've spent $22.95 for a book I haven't even opened. I can't imagine why I bought it in the first place. I mean, it's not as if I've been a big fan of David Stockman. He looks like he was George Will's roommate in college and they had the only absolutely tidy room in the dormitory."

"Take it easy, Howard," I said. "You just got here. How do you know you won't read it before the end of the summer?"

"That's how I know," Howard said, pointing to a small mountain of thick volumes on the other side of the parlor. I couldn't see all the titles from where I was sitting, but I did make out *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President*, by Jimmy Carter, and *The White House Years*, by Henry Kissinger. "I haven't opened any of them," Howard said. "I feel just awful about this whole thing."

None of this surprised me. Every winter, Howard, feverish with good intentions, buys some pound-and-a-half political memoir that he describes as "important," and puts it aside to read when he gets to the beach cottage in the summer. He never seems to remember that what he actually does at the beach all summer is putter around in an old shed turning found objects like driftwood and lobster buoys into small pieces of furniture that, in the words of the mutual friend we call Marty Mean Tongue, "make you understand that certain found objects were meant to remain lost."

Sitting there in the Corkums' parlor, wobbling slightly on a chair Howard has fashioned from railroad ties, I regretted not having thought to phone Howard's wife, Edna, last winter and suggest that she clip any mention of the Stockman book from Howard's newspaper, the way that a criminal court bailiff might clip references to a notorious murder case before allowing the afternoon paper into the jury room.

Once he's bought a book, it's too late. "But do you actually think you're going to read *A Time to Heal*, by Gerald Ford?" I asked one spring, in the slim hope that I could persuade him to include it in a couple of boxes of books I was about to take down to the local Veterans Administration Hospital.

"Not now, of course," he said. "It's the sort of book you save for the summer."

I've never known what else to do except to encourage him in his carpentry, if that's what it is, on the theory that if he believes it's a worthwhile activity he might feel less guilty about not completing what he seems to treat as the homework the publishing industry has assigned all citizens. I haven't had the nerve to suggest to Edna that she do the same; she once confessed to me that if Howard presented her with one more useless and outlandish piece of furniture she might attempt to turn him into a lawn chair and donate him to the Salvation Army.

"That's a fine-looking firewood box you've made over there out of old bakers' tins," I said, when Howard was carrying on about the Stockman book.

"It's a telephone caddy," Howard said glumly.

"Well, it's a very handsome piece anyway," I said. "I think there's something quite artistic about that jagged edge in the back there."

"I don't suppose you've read *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy*, by Alexander Haig, have you?" Howard asked.

"Howard, you know I don't read political memoirs," I said. "I don't mind listening to what politicians say when they're in office, but I'm certainly not going to pay to hear it all over again."

"I thought I should read it as another foreign policy view if I read *The Real War*, by Richard Nixon," Howard said.

"Did you read *The Real War*, by Richard Nixon?"

"No, it's over there behind *My Story*, by Geraldine Ferraro," Howard said. "I feel terrible about that. What a waste! What a terrible waste!"

I paid another visit to the Corkums a few weeks later, expecting to find Howard sunk even deeper in his summer swamp of guilt. Instead I found him whistling cheerfully. Edna, it turned out, had made a decision. She had collected all of the political memoirs, lugged them to the shed and informed Howard that what she really needed desperately was a stand to put next to the kitchen counter for the toaster and waffle iron.

Howard had gone for the idea at once. For a while he didn't think he had enough memoirs on hand, but then he found that he could fashion part of a leg from a number of James Michener novels Edna had been meaning to get to.

Naturally, I complimented him on the complete work.

"Well, it's not quite finished," Howard said. "When you get back to the city, I'd appreciate it if you could send me *No More Vietnams*, by Richard Nixon. From what I understand about how long it is, it would be perfect for keeping that right leg from wobbling."

"I'd be happy to, Howard," I said.

"Try not to forget," Howard said. "For me, it's an important book."

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On September 29 the Nation Associates will host a reception for Frank W. Lewis, who for more than forty years has set our crossword puzzle. Please call the *Nation* office at (212) 242-8400, extension 13, if you would like an invitation.

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ARTICLES.

THE N.R.C.'S PRESCRIPTION

Increasing Our Radiation Dose

BRIAN JACOBS

On January 9 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission placed in the Federal Register a proposal to revise existing standards of radiation exposure for workers and for the general public. This major revision—the first since standards were adopted in 1959—would permit a more than tenfold increase in the allowable exposure for many of the most dangerous types of radiation. According to the commission, the proposed standard does not require public discussion since it "will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment." Thus, although there was a comment period, initially of four months, no hearings were scheduled and no environmental impact statements were issued.

The N.R.C. proposes to increase the permissible annual intake of radiation (the amount ingested through eating, drinking and breathing that settles in various internal organs) by up to seventeen times for 65 percent of the radionuclides the commission considers dangerous. Permissible intake of iodine 131, which was released by the explosion at Chernobyl, will be raised more than eight times. Although the new standards would recognize for the first time that fetuses are more vulnerable to radiation than adults, the recommended standard for pregnant women, 500 millirems per year, may be five times too high for fetuses in the first trimester. According to Dr. Alice Stewart, the British epidemiologist who established a link between in utero X-ray exposure and childhood cancer, a dose of 100 millirems in the first trimester could double the risk of a child developing cancer by the age of 15.

The N.R.C. also plans to retain the thirty-year-old standard for total permissible body dose (external and internal radiation combined) of 5 rems for radiation workers and one-tenth that, 500 millirems, for the public. Many prominent scientists believe that level to be at least ten times too high.

Radiation standards in this country and most other nuclear powers are usually based on recommendations from in[illegible]roup of a dozen scientists, chosen by their peers, called no[illegible] International Commission on Radiological Protection buff[illegible]R.P.), which has an unofficial advisory relationship imag[illegible] the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The current pela[illegible]dards are based on the international commission's for[illegible]cument Number 2, published in 1959. By the early 1960s, "c[illegible]wever, scientists generally agreed that no level of radiation w[illegible] is safe. Setting standards then became a political, as well as a scientific, judgment. The I.C.R.P. admitted in 1965 that the 5 rem per year occupational limit should not be construed as a safe dose but rather "a compromise between deleterious effects and social benefits . . . [which] provides reasonable latitude for the expansion of atomic energy programs in the foreseeable future." Similarly, the proposed revision talks about "acceptable level of risk," not safe levels.

The N.R.C. justifies retaining the 5 rem/500 millirem limit on the ground that there have been no "significant increases . . . in health detriment of workers or members of the public since 1957; on the contrary, protection has been good." This view is contradicted by studies of inhabitants downwind of the Nevada tests of the 1950s and 1960s. One such study published in the January 1984 issue of *Journal of the American Medical Association* by Dr. Carl Johnson, the Medical Officer for South Dakota, showed that those people had a significantly higher cancer rate than the general public. Johnson's evidence together with similar findings in a 1979 study by Dr. Joseph Lyon, an epidemiologist at the University of Utah, were persuasive enough to win the victims millions of dollars in compensation from the government on May 10, 1984.

Nor can civilian nuclear power be said to have a clean record. Many large-scale accidental radiation releases have been documented, the best known of which is the 10 million curies released in 1979 at Three Mile Island. In 1975 an accident at the Millstone nuclear plant in Connecticut emitted more than 2 million curies. According to Robert Alvarez at the Environmental Policy Institute in Washington, the radiation levels were high enough to trip the alarms at a nearby

DRAWINGS BY ISADORE SELTZER

Brian Jacobs is an environmental researcher at the Council on Economic Priorities.

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naval shipyard, causing officials there to believe they were having an accident. Proving health damage in court for either of those cases will be difficult, however, because of the long latency period for cancer and the difficulty of establishing a causal link between exposure and illness. When residents of Middletown, Pennsylvania, brought a class-action suit against General Public Utilities, which owned the Three Mile Island plant, the company settled out of court for $20 million to avoid a trial that might have established that the plaintiffs had been harmed by radiation. More than 2,000 suits resulting from the accident are still pending.

Dr. Karl Morgan, who pioneered the study of nuclear physics and health, is among several prominent scientists who believe the government has grossly underestimated the health risk from exposure to low levels of ionizing radiation. Now retired, Morgan spent thirty years with the Atomic Energy Commission as director of the Health Physics Division of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. An I.C.R.P. member for more than twenty years, he was chair of the Internal Dose Committee of the international commission when Document Number 2 was published. "Today," he said, "we know that the risk of radiation-induced cancer is more than ten times what we believed it to be in 1959." In making the proposed changes, Morgan said, "it is unthinkable that roughly half of the permissible levels will be *increased* rather than decreased when everyone agrees the risk of getting cancer is greater than we thought it was when the present level was established." Morgan met twice with N.R.C. members in an effort to convince them that the proposal is not a good idea. He charges that the commission has "finally weakened to political pressure and given second place to the health of radiation workers and the public."

The N.R.C. has argued that its proposed standards are in keeping with a trend among other countries with nuclear power. That is simply not true. The West German counterpart to the N.R.C., the Commission on Radiation Protection (Strahlenschutzkommission), rejected the I.C.R.P.'s recommended permissible dose of radiation to the thyroid and bone marrow for the general public.

The N.R.C. standard and the claim by the commission that it is using updated information are part of a larger story of the government's attempt to control research and information on the health effects of radiation. At its inception in 1946, the A.E.C. was given two roles: the development and testing of the American nuclear arsenal and the protection of the population from this testing. As documented most recently by Howard Ball in *Justice Downwind*, and in the thousands of radiation damage suits filed against the government since the 1950s, the A.E.C. chose to value the testing program over the health and safety of the people. In ruling in the class-action suit *Allen v. United States*, filed by the downwinders in Utah, Judge Bruce S. Jenkins wrote, "People . . . in Utah, Nevada and Arizona had been deprived of the opportunity to protect themselves . . . through the negligence of those who, on an operational level, failed to adequately educate, inform and warn."

The successor to the A.E.C., the Department of Energy, spends more than 70 percent of its budget on the research and development of nuclear weapons and nuclear power. It also funds 60 percent of all the research on the health effects of radiation. The Radiation Research Reorganization Act of 1985 attempts to address this conflict of interest by transferring health research to the Department of Health and Human Services. The bill has been stalled in committee partly because of opposition by the Reagan Administration.

After thirty years of research on radiation's adverse health effects, there is ample evidence to warrant a revision of existing standards. What the research reveals, however, is that the current standards need to be considerably more restrictive, not less. Instead of incorporating the new evidence, the N.R.C. and I.C.R.P. rely heavily on research from data collected at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the early 1950s. The researchers extrapolated from the high doses of radiation the populace was exposed to in those cities to determine cancer risk at lower doses. In the past five years, studies by Lawrence Livermore Laboratory and other labs experienced in radiation research indicate that there were serious flaws in this first analysis. The Hiroshima survivors, for example, do not represent a "normal" population, as was assumed in determining the risk coefficient (the cancer rate in a given population per rem of exposure), but an unusually robust one whose survival shows strong resistance to blast, heat and infections. These studies also found that since low doses of radiation yield a higher cancer rate per rem than high doses, extrapolation is not possible.

More recent studies are free of those scientific pitfalls. One of the most important to date is a study, the first part of which was published in *Health Physics* in 1977, that was directed by Dr. Thomas F. Mancuso of the University of Pittsburgh and sponsored by the A.E.C. and the D.O.E. It surveys a normal, healthy population using sophisticated controls and, more important, it is not based on any extrapolation, since the subjects had only been exposed to low-level radiation. Worried about the growing number of compensation claims, the A.E.C. commissioned Mancuso in 1964 to conduct an epidemiological study of radiation workers at the Hanford plutonium processing plant in Richland, Washington. Mancuso was chosen for the study because, as an A.E.C. commissioner at the time put it, "It is generally conceded that he is one of the best occupational epidemiologists in the world." For twelve years Mancuso and his research team collected data on more than 35,000 people in one of the most comprehensive studies on the effects of low-level radiation. Workers' exposure was monitored daily by means of radiation film badges. Urinalysis exams were given frequently to monitor internal exposure. Drawing on records going back to 1946, the researchers were able to follow the workers' health through more than twenty-five years.

After ten years, the study suggested that exposure to radiation had not led to higher rates of cancer among the Hanford workers. In 1974, however, Dr. Samuel Milham, a Washington State health officer, conducted a study showing a higher cancer rate at Hanford, but he was persuaded by the A.E.C. not to publish it. Working from state death cer-

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tificates, Milham divided up workers according to industry and found that radiation workers at Hanford had a 25 percent higher cancer mortality rate than workers in other industries, such as steel, lumber and food processing. The A.E.C. then asked Mancuso to publish his findings, which would have refuted Milham's. Mancuso refused on the ground that more work was needed. He called on Stewart and her statistician, Dr. George Kneale, to reanalyze the data. After a year, they concluded that the earlier negative results were partially explained by the long latency period of cancer. In what became known as the M.S.K. study, the three scientists identified over 5 percent of the workers' cancers as radiation-related. Still more startling was the fact that the increased number of cancers occurred at doses considerably lower than the legal limit of 5 rems per year. The doses to the workers were sometimes comparable with those absorbed by the general public. These findings meant that the current permissible dose for workers is ten to twenty times too high, according to Mancuso and his colleagues.

The implications of the study for the A.E.C. and the D.O.E. were too far-reaching; the floodgates would be opened to compensation claims not only by radiation workers but also by veterans and civilians exposed to fallout from the above-ground tests in the 1950s and early 1960s. The D.O.E. removed Mancuso from the Hanford project in 1977 and handed part of it over to Oak Ridge Associated Universities, a consortium of universities linked to the Oak Ridge National Lab, a weapons research facility that had never published an unbiased epidemiological study on radiation, according to Karl Morgan. In hearings in 1978, the House Subcommittee on Health and Environment rejected the D.O.E.'s reasons for transferring the study, but nothing came of it and the press largely ignored the story.

Dr. Thomas Najarian's 1977 study of radiation workers at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard also encountered government resistance. According to *The Boston Globe*, which helped track down the workers, Najarian, a hematologist at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Boston, found that the rate of cancer for shipyard workers exposed to radiation on the job was 38.4 percent, compared with 18 percent for the general public. In addition, Najarian discovered that those workers had a 450 percent higher leukemia mortality rate. Cancer caused 60 percent of the deaths among workers in their 60s, compared with only 26.1 percent for non-radiation workers. The Navy, however, refused to cooperate with the study or to comment on its conclusions.

Another important study was conducted by Dr. Irwin Bross, former director of biostatistics at Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo. The nine-year study on the effects of ordinary diagnostic X-rays, which was sponsored by the government-run National Cancer Institute (N.C.I.), found that children who were exposed at various stages in utero to X-ray doses of under 1 rem had up to 50 percent greater risk of dying from leukemia. Bross's research confirmed Stewart's earlier study, adding to the evidence that low-level radiation is more hazardous than currently recognized. In May 1977, after Bross published his study in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, it was given peer review by government scientists who, according to Bross, were deliberately placed on the N.C.I. review panel to discredit findings like his. Shortly thereafter the institute discontinued his study. Since that experience Bross has become a strong critic of what he terms "official science," saying that the government is less interested in new evidence than in support for previously drawn conclusions. "The big science Federal agencies such as the A.E.C., their industrial constituencies and their allies in the scientific and medical communities," he charges, "have been lying to the public about the hazards of low-level ionizing radiation for twenty-five years."

More recently, working on his own, Bross re-evaluated the health data on a sample of 50,000 of the estimated 250,000 service personnel exposed to radiation as part of the nuclear testing program in the 1950s. He found that 500 had died from radiation-induced illnesses. The National Academy of Sciences, which conducted a similar study in 1985 to help settle compensation claims that threatened to cost the government billions of dollars, had reported at the time that it had found no significant health risk to veterans because of exposure.

Many scientists await the results of a major reanalysis of the data from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, financed by the governments of Japan and the United States (albeit quietly—funds from the Department of Energy are being funneled through the National Academy of Sciences), and carried out under the auspices of the Radiation Effects Research Foundation in Japan. Dr. Edward Radford, who chaired a National Academy of Sciences committee on the biological effects of ionizing radiation in 1980, is familiar with the problems of the data and says on the basis of the new research that standards should be ten times more stringent. Other scientists agree that the reanalysis of the data will almost certainly show that the risk coefficient has been underestimated by at least a factor of two.

The Chernobyl accident in April, which raised public consciousness about the hazards of nuclear power, may actually have helped prevent the N.R.C.'s revision from taking effect. More than 300 comments on the revision, most of them critical, have been received by the commission this year. In an unusual move partly due to recent criticism, according to a commission spokesperson, the N.R.C. extended the public comment period six months, through October. The original author of the revision, Bob Baker, a pro-nuke physicist, is no longer on the commission, but his replacement, Robert Alexander, who originally expressed doubts about loosening the standards, recently came out in favor of accepting the I.C.R.P. recommendations.

The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurement, the American version of I.C.R.P., has recently rejected the revision. Executive director W. Roger Ney commented that the drafting was poorly done, and thought the N.R.C. should wait until the council published its recommendations, which are expected soon. Even so, the national council, like the I.C.R.P., is heavily weighted toward the nuclear industry, and the likelihood

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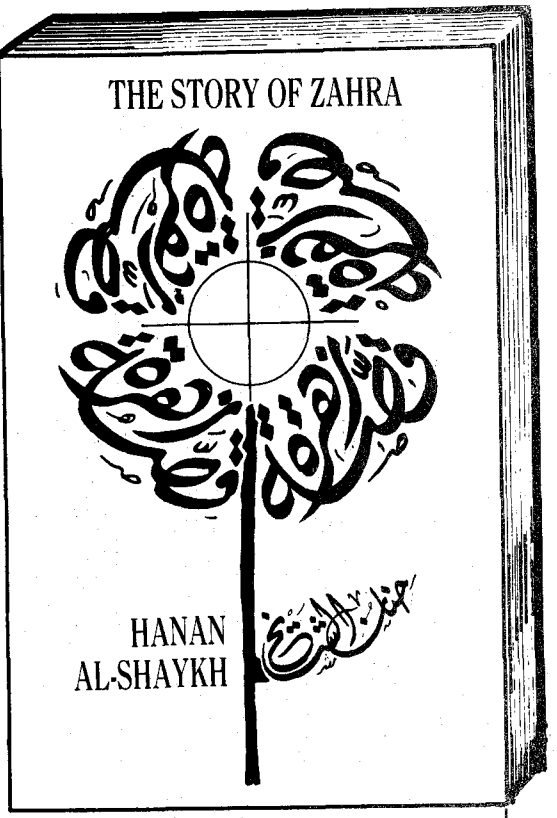

War in Lebanon: a young woman falls to a sniper's love, then to his bullet. *The Story of Zahra* scandalized the Arab world by telling how Muslim women *really* live behind the taboos and traditions. That this book was written in the Arab world is unusual—that a Shiite Muslim woman wrote it is quite extraordinary. The author, Hanan al-Shaykh, speaks with authority and sensitivity about sexuality, war and religion in the world's most divided society. "A haunting and chilling study of the fatal fascination of violence," says London's *Observer*. The *Sunday Times* called it "subversive truthfulness".

From Brazil, Antônio Torres' *The Land* brings us the harsh, lyrical world of the Backland region, whose peasants survive with grim humor, and whose children long for the phantom riches of São Paulo. This modern Brazilian classic on the conflict between the rural and the urban now comes into English for the first time.

Next to Africa and the satirical *Laugh-to-Cry*, as the great Congolese novelist Henri Lopez lampoons the supreme African dictator—Amin, Bokassa, Mobutu, all in one—who moves overnight from the barracks to the Presidential Palace. Funny but searing: Lopez' satire bites with anger and sadness at Africa's burden of butcher-clowns.

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that the new standards will differ radically from the current proposal appears small. More probable is that an enormous amount of evidence discrediting the proposed and current standards will be ignored at the expense of the public and nuclear workers, and that the new revision from the N.R.C. will remain, as Morgan said, "a terrible retreat of the N.R.C. from its obligation to protect the public from the harmful effects of nuclear power." □

LETTER FROM PERU

The Bloom Is Off Alan García

LUCY KOMISAR

Lima, Peru

When Alan García was elected President of Peru a little over a year ago, many people hoped that this bright young leader would put forward a new model for the region. At 36, García achieved a stunning victory, winning 53 percent of the vote and bringing his center-left American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) to power for the first time in sixty years. With another 25 percent of the ballots going to the United Left, a coalition of mostly Marxist parties, he had a mandate for change.

García started out using radical rhetoric, proclaiming that he would defend the country against U.S. imperialism and promising to end economic exploitation of the poor. Although he correctly eschewed the social democratic label—he is a populist rather than a leftist—he seemed bent on turning APRA away from the rightist course it has followed for the past twenty-five years.

García aroused strong hopes in the urban slums and rural villages, among people whose trade unions, peasant federations and community organizations are largely controlled by the left. Even the United Left, García's main opposition in Parliament, accorded him a measure of support. In fact, its presidential candidate, Alfonso Barrantes, the Mayor of Lima, muted his campaign, holding fifty mass meetings to García's 200, to insure that García would win. He feared a military coup if the left came to power.

But García's first year has raised serious doubts about his commitment to social change and his support for the substance as well as the form of democracy. The evidence increasingly indicates that his chief interest is in building a party machine that will keep him in power. His strategy has been to let the right-wing element of his party battle the Peruvian left. He has set up parallel worker and peasant unions to challenge the left's control of mass organizations such as the United National Agrarian Congress, and channels government largesse through them. García has also tolerated national and local APRA leaders who have accused United Left figures and sympathetic organizations of ties to the Maoist guerrillas of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path).

The United Left is a coalition of parties ranging from pluralist to Maoist. Whatever their ideological trappings, they proclaim a commitment to the democratic process in Peru and say they want to take power through elections, not revolution. They oppose Sendero, although some of their condemnations seem tempered by revolutionary nostalgia. The largest group, the Maoist Patria Roja ("Red Nation"), controls the teachers' union. The United Mariátegui Party, which supports a multiparty system, is the most influential in Parliament and in intellectual circles and dominates in the peasant federations and miners' unions.

An active network of peasant, Catholic and human rights organizations have also come under attack by APRA leaders. Vladimiro Valer, a human rights lawyer and university professor in Cuzco, said the local prefect, García's cousin, accused the town's human rights organization of being pro-terrorist. (As in the French system, the prefect is appointed by the president.) In Puno, Ricardo Vega, who runs a church-affiliated experimental farm, said the local branch of APRA spread rumors that his farm was a center of subversion. Whether García sponsors or merely tolerates these attacks is unclear, but they are a sign that he feels threatened by the left's strength.

His strategy of opposing the left has made it convenient for García to move closer to the military and turn a blind eye while the armed forces kill or arrest peasant leaders allied with the left in the countryside, close the leftist newspaper *Nuevo Diario* in Lima or prohibit the Revolutionary Socialist Party, a left social democratic party with members in Parliament, from holding a congress in the capital. One can argue that the reason García handles the military so carefully is that he fears a coup. In a country that was ruled by generals from 1968 to 1980, this is not an idle fear.

The military does not object to economic reform. There are progressive sectors in it that date back to the 1968-75 period when Gen. Juan Velasco Alvarado carried out a significant land redistribution that reduced the power of the land-owning oligarchy. However, agrarian reform has had only limited success. Overall, the program benefited only about 25 percent of rural workers throughout the country, and in some areas the percentage was much lower.

In Puno, one of the departments where Sendero is active, reforms helped the former laborers on the haciendas, who became cooperative members and were given holdings averaging 420 acres each, but the peasants, who farmed small plots, were left with their few acres—of the worst land. Most of the haciendas had been formed between 1890 and 1920 through the seizure of peasants' land. The descendants of these peasants have organized leftist federations and continue to express strong dissatisfaction over the land redistribution. Some military men make little distinction between Sendero and these groups.

Rumors of a coup have originated inside the government, some would say to evoke national or international sympathy and support. In June, García himself promoted coup stories after the bloody assaults by soldiers on the Lima prisons. He

Lucy Komisar, a frequent Nation *contributor on foreign affairs, recently spent six weeks in Peru.*

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contacted Raul Alfonsín in Argentina, Belisario Betancur in Colombia and even the U.S. government, asking for support.

The military, however, knows a coup would lead to civil war against the mass organizations of the left and sectors of APRA. The army would also inherit an economic crisis and win the hostility of most of its Latin American neighbors and Western creditors. And it would have to contend with García's continued popularity, which is helped by a sophisticated media campaign and the support of the major communications organizations, many of which are indebted to state banks. "The military doesn't want power at this moment," said a Western diplomat. "The situation of the country is bad, the international reaction would be very bad. And they are doing just what they would do if they were in government."

The actions in June provide a good example. At first García defended the assaults on the three Lima prisons where several hundred accused guerrilla prisoners had mutinied. After witnesses revealed how the Republican Guard, a paramilitary police, had executed one hundred prisoners who had surrendered, he declared that those responsible would be jailed and tried for homicide. But he did not condemn the military's bombing into rubble another prison where rebels had reportedly returned fire with small arms. Nor did he condemn the army, which had control of the entire operation, for the murder of the one hundred prisoners.

In the weeks afterward, the commander of the Republican Guard was allowed to resign, but no military leader was touched. The Republican Guards accused of the executions remained in their barracks. In July, a civilian judge ordered that Gen. Jorge Rabanal, who had directed the actions of the Republican Guard, be arrested and tried for murder. Following that, the military announced it would hold its own trial of Rabanal—a way of removing the case from civilian jurisdiction and preparing for a whitewash.

The prison killings were not surprising in light of the dirty war the army has been carrying out in the Andes Mountains where Sendero Luminoso has been operating since 1980. Under the conservative government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry, massacres of families and whole villages accused of helping the guerrillas were common. The majority of the more than 7,000 people killed since 1980 have been peasants. More than 2,000 disappearances have been registered in this country of 20 million. Under the state of emergency declared in several departments four years ago and expanded under García, constitutional guarantees were suspended and the military took control of civilian governments.

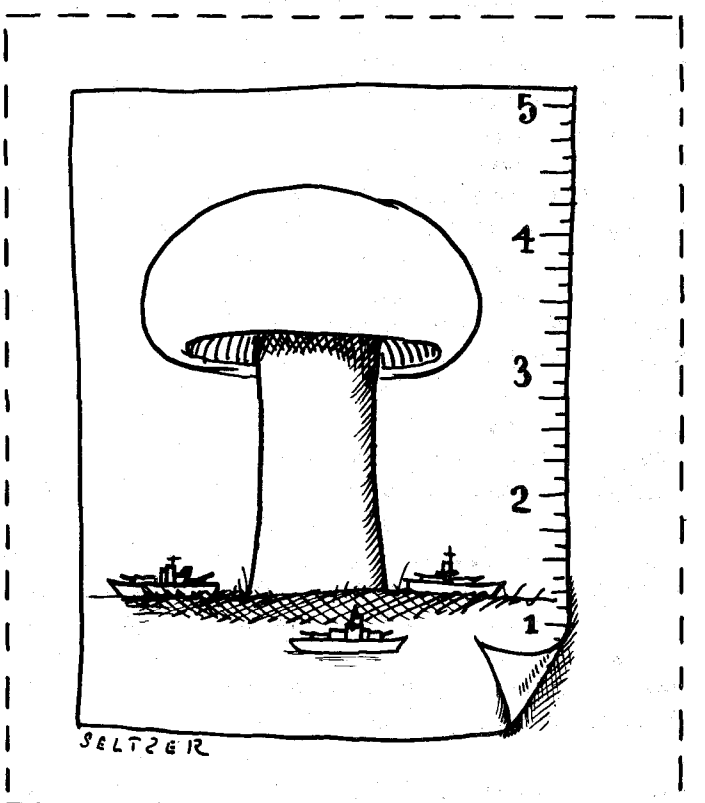
Initially, the human rights situation improved under García. In September 1985 he removed the head of the joint chiefs of staff and two other top generals after an army massacre of fifty-nine civilians in Accomarca and the discovery in Pucallacu of a grave with the bodies of seven men who had been detained by the military. The number of disappearances and killings dropped. However, one cashiered general was appointed superintendent of the military academy, and human rights leaders say García made a deal with the military: if they stop wholesale killings, he will not look into past crimes.

In February, a state of emergency was declared in Lima, extending army rule to 40 percent of the country's population. Moreover, human rights abuses continue selectively without investigations or prosecutions. In one case in April, Alberto Mamerto Huamani Chillccee, an employee of the Huancapi district council and secretary of the United Left coalition of his Andean town, was taken from his home by soldiers, beaten and tied to a horse, which dragged him through a municipal field in full view of townspeople. His family found his burned body twelve days later.

The Catholic human rights organization in Lima, which investigated the case, reported that witnesses had seen the military burn another person alive. The group charged that people had been held for weeks in underground cells, denied visits from lawyers and given only dirty water and food. Jorge Tincopa, a United Left Member of Parliament from Ayacucho, called attacks on his party's leaders part of "a plan to terrorize opposition activists . . . so they don't want to act even on the level of the United Left or unions."

Terror is the armed forces' only strategy for confronting Sendero. Nevertheless, Gen. Jose Flores Torres, Minister of War, acknowledged its ineffectiveness when he admitted in an interview, "We will have Sendero for a long time, because it is hard to combat. We don't know their faces. They act in a site and disappear. We are always behind them." A Western diplomat said the army is handicapped by incompetence, lack of basic equipment and corruption.

Flores says he has no idea how many Sendero guerrillas there are. A few years ago, Sendero controlled extensive areas in the most remote sections of three highland departments; local police and government officials withdrew or



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were killed. After some 7,000 army troops were deployed in the emergency zones, the situation was reversed, but Sendero just moved higher up the mountains or to the jungle and to Cuzco and Puno farther south.

In Puno in June, Sendero took advantage of peasant demands for land by attacking local haciendas and cooperatives. The guerrillas killed the local managers and distributed the livestock to the peasants; the next day, the army arrived and brutalized and jailed the peasants for robbery. One woman died after a soldier shoved a machine gun down her throat.

Sendero has won some adherents by attacking the most hated and corrupt local powers, cattle thieves and even narcotics traffickers. However, it is opposed by large numbers of peasants, either out of repugnance for its terrorist tactics or out of fear of military reprisal. It has had little success in areas of organized peasant unions where there is a measure of political sophistication and active left parties.

Sendero was created at a provincial university in the Andes by the sons and daughters of the Quechua-speaking peasants, who suffer not only from poverty but also from racism, and whose demands for water, schooling, roads and health services from the central government have been long ignored. During his campaign for the presidency, García announced his intention to diminish Sendero's influence through social and economic reforms. The government continues to proclaim that its strategy is to improve the lot of the peasants, who constitute the "sea" in which the Maoist-influenced guerrillas swim.

As of now, García's policy of winning over the peasantry through a program of financial aid, bank credits and higher farm prices is mostly words, say international development workers in the area. Some 75 percent of credit still goes to the more prosperous coastal area, where only a third of the farmers live. In the highlands, credit goes not to the poor but to farmers used to dealing with banks. Price controls still favor the urban consumer over the rural producer, making local production so unprofitable that food imports have been increasing, using up scarce foreign exchange. There is no technical help for peasants, some of whom still use farming methods practiced by the Incas.

Ramon Vega, a government agronomist in the highlands, told me, "Communities that are not with the government don't get aid." The same story is told in Cuzco, where the APRA party is also controlled by conservative elements. Fernando Villafuerte, an anthropologist at the Bartolomé de las Casas Center there, said APRA leaders were connected to "the judges, the police, the landowners who take advantage of the peasants." He said the bureaucracy didn't have the will or capacity to carry out García's programs. Although the central government announced it was firing Cuzco officials who had been blocking its credit program, weeks later the men were still in their jobs.

In the cities, the picture is equally bleak. So many peasants have migrated to the city slums that only 30 percent of the populace lives in rural areas, but Peru lacks industry. It is estimated that half the work force is employed in the underground economy. The streets are lined with vendors

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selling everything from clothes hangers to ballpoint pens.

García achieved success with a series of emergency economic measures that froze prices and the exchange rate and raised salaries for the lowest-paid workers. Protectionist laws that favor national industry boosted the production of consumer goods. As a result, inflation was slashed from the 250 percent it reached at the end of Belaúnde's term to 70 percent.

This decline has stabilized the economy, but critics say that although these measures were needed, they can't last indefinitely, and there is no coherent medium- or long-term economic plan. The prices of Peru's traditional exports—petroleum, sugar, copper, gold and silver—have fallen sharply, but there is no thought given to converting to other products. A Westerner working in the area of international development said, "They say it's the fault of the I.M.F. and the imperialists, but they have no idea of how to change the economy, no strategy of a new position for Peru inside the international economy."

There is little foreign investment here; the government coffers are drained by debt payments and by more than 175 state enterprises, most of which lose money as a result of inefficiency and corruption. The business class prefers to speculate for quick profits to send abroad. Companies' lines of credit with foreign banks are drying up. At the moment, however, García does have the support of most of the business community, which appreciates the success of his initial measures and sees no alternative leadership.

García's labor policy has been mixed. He doubled the minimum wage to $42 a month and expanded social security coverage. A pro-labor law was enacted with APRA's support providing for job security after three months' work, though also allowing firing for cause. At the same time, a new strike law shortened the negotiation period. By making strikes less costly to management, the law encourages waiting for arbitration, thus reducing unions' clout. Another measure allows large firms to hire nonunion part-time workers for added shifts, also weakening the unions.

Even García's claim to fame, his declaration that he will not pay more than 10 percent of export earnings in foreign debt service, has been disputed here, though recent payments appear not to have been much above the limit. The debate over whether he has broken his campaign promise is difficult to resolve because the figures depend on what kind of accounting system is used and what is included in export earnings. Last year's exports of approximately $3.3 billion are expected to drop because of the loss in oil earnings.

So far, García has made a $250 million payment to the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank—a necessity if Peru is to get more loans—and two $35 million payments to the International Monetary Fund; he had promised the I.M.F. $157 million more, which would have increased debt payments substantially and which Peru says now will not be paid. Peru must also pay bilateral debts; payment to the Soviet Union has been in kind. In July, García announced that foreign companies must keep their profits inside Peru for two years to promote the national economy. In August, he ordered private companies to stop payments to foreign banks on medium- and long-term loans totaling $1.5 billion for at least two years. They are current on short-term payments.

The view in Washington is that the economy is not going to collapse; it's a subsistence economy, and people are subsisting. Yet the Reagan Administration has overreacted to García's anti-imperialist rhetoric. "A lot of people in Washington would like to see García fail," said an American observer. He said that "foot-dragging in Washington with respect to disbursements of foreign aid" almost caused Peru to run afoul of the Brooke-Alexander amendment, which bans dispensing new funds to countries in arrears for more than a year on loan payments to the United States. However, Peru

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yet every time Congress has voted down contra aid, Israel has increased its involvement with the contras. Since the late 70s Israel's presence in Central America has followed the same seesaw pattern, supplying Guatemala, El Salvador, Somoza and his heirs, the contras, whatever the US denies.

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paid up to the year's grace period, and $58 million in aid was released at the end of June.

The big unanswered question for the future is the role of the army. Most would agree with Felipe Osterling, a leader of the right-wing Popular Christian Party, who stated that, "García will have to continue governing with strong connections to the armed forces." The question, says a United Left Member of Parliament, Rolando Ames, is "Who commands in the antisubversive war?"

A second question is the role of the mass organizations. If one of García's main objectives is to weaken the left, he will loose disruptive forces heretofore kept in check. "The left now tranquilizes the people," said Ames. "The left has political realism. It values García's nationalist politics. If he passes to a pro-system attitude, that would bring us to confrontation."

For now, however, there is no alternative to Alan García. Though some sectors of the left are more critical, Barrantes believes it could be dangerous if García fails. A Western diplomat said hopefully, "He can save this debacle with the credibility that remains and the fact that all political forces think that he is the only solution." □

Swiss Banks

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

financial markets may be greater leverage by U.S. authorities in obtaining once-sacred financial information. Swiss banks are among Wall Street's largest clients; their need to operate freely in New York is a fact not lost on the Justice Department.

One Swiss bank, the Banque Populaire Suisse, was suspended from trading on U.S. commodity markets after it refused to cooperate with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's investigation into the Hunt brothers' infamous grab at the world's silver in 1980. And the Securities and Exchange Commission's threats against the Bank Leu's New York branch convinced it to provide information on the accused inside trader Dennis Levine.

Avaricious world leaders and inside traders may no longer count on Switzerland's unflinching discretion, but for less notorious investors, the Swiss banking system is still very much intact. Jean-François Brocher of the Banque Gutzwiller, Kurz and Burgener in Geneva, who spent several years working in the United States, says: "The pyramid of people protected by bank secrecy has narrowed a bit. If I were the President of the Sudan, I might think twice about taking out a Swiss account. But for most investors, things are still the same."

The mood at a recent six-day conference in Lausanne, billed as Seeking Safe Harbors: the Swiss Investors Summit, confirmed Brocher's view that, apart from certain high-profile cases, little has changed for small investors. One hundred and fifty people paid $625 each (not including hotel, food and travel expenses) to hear Swiss bankers and a parade of American and British financial experts present a picture of Swiss banking that seemed smug and self-confident, remote from the upheavals taking place in the nation's banks.

The conferees descended on the luxurious Beau Rivage Palace, overlooking Lake Geneva, for a series of seminars and workshops on investing abroad, moving money offshore and opening a Swiss bank account. Their numbers included stockbrokers, real estate agents, a banker from the Cayman Islands, a handful of wealthy heirs and an I.B.M. executive who summed up the spirit of his fellow seekers: "Everyone here would like to become a millionaire." The Lausanne gathering was organized by Charles Githler 3d, president of Investment Seminars Inc., which runs an international network of financial "summits." In addition to the more prestigious meetings in Lausanne and Monte Carlo, Githler sponsors conferences each year in Hong Kong; Fort Lauderdale; San Francisco; Vancouver, Canada; and Sydney, Australia.

In Lausanne, Githler introduced self-proclaimed financial and "geopolitical" experts, including Swiss bankers, European and American financial advisers, newsletter writers and fervent advocates of conservative political policies. The speakers presented an array of financial strategies to their audiences. Michael Marsh, the dapper president of Troy Associates, a Geneva-based offshore investment fund, proposed investing in national currencies. Philip Gray, managing director of G.T. Management in London, suggested that the slow-moving European stock markets were entering a new vital period with the election of conservative governments across the Continent. "The winds of deregulation," he declared, "are blowing across the cobwebs of Europe."

The conference featured speakers who combined investment tips with florid rhetoric against government interventionism and praise for the virtues of unfettered capitalism. "I deal with a lot of people who hate governments," said Marsh. Taxes, and by extension the governments that impose them, were denounced as the primary enemy. Larry Abraham, a newsletter writer and a contributing editor of *Conservative Digest*, railed against the Rockefellers and "state socialists" for "stomping out capitalism." The keynote speaker was Arnaud de Borchgrave, editor of *The Washington Times*, whom Githler promised would "awaken us to the effects of Soviet disinformation." De Borchgrave enlivened the audience with a speech on international terrorism, explaining how "a very well-orchestrated strategy among states aligned with the Soviet Union aims for the collapse and destruction of the state of Israel." He then urged his listeners to write letters to the American television networks protesting the appearance of such purveyors of disinformation as Vladimir Posner and Alexander Cockburn.

At the Monte Carlo summit the following week politics shifted into high gear, as Lieut. Gen. Daniel Graham, described as the father of Star Wars, gave a keynote address on the economic impact of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Mark Schapiro, formerly with the Center for Investigative Reporting, is working on an investigative project in Europe for The Nation.

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But the situation in South Africa sparked the greatest interest among bankers and investors in Lausanne. With bad news about South Africa's economy flooding the newspapers, Githler turned to two speakers with firsthand experience in the country: Donald McAlvany, a director of the Fellowship of Christian Advisers, head of International Collectors Associates and a sponsor of business trips to South Africa; and Robert Hall, who claimed to have served on the Reagan Administration's South Africa policy transition team in 1980. "The Christian moral attitudes in that country are unbelievable," said Hall, who recently settled on a ranch outside Johannesburg. He warned that a Soviet-inspired conflict in South Africa is intended to isolate the West from its sources of strategic minerals. McAlvany added grimly that "the conflict in South Africa is the most important battle since World War II."

Once the sober Swiss bankers took the stage, however, the tone of the proceedings changed dramatically. Addressing a workshop titled "The Practicalities of Opening a Private Account in Switzerland," Hans Zweidler, the wiry, self-assured manager of the Handelsbank in Zurich, reassured the guests: "Every once in a while, people predict that bank secrecy will be abolished. I can assure you that it is here to stay."

Zweidler assured his auditors that correspondence between his bank and its customers is clandestine. The bank sends out no periodic reports or account statements, limiting all communications to the telex or the telephone—preferably an untraceable pay phone. Customers are issued a code to identify themselves, and only top managers are aware of the identity of numbered account holders.

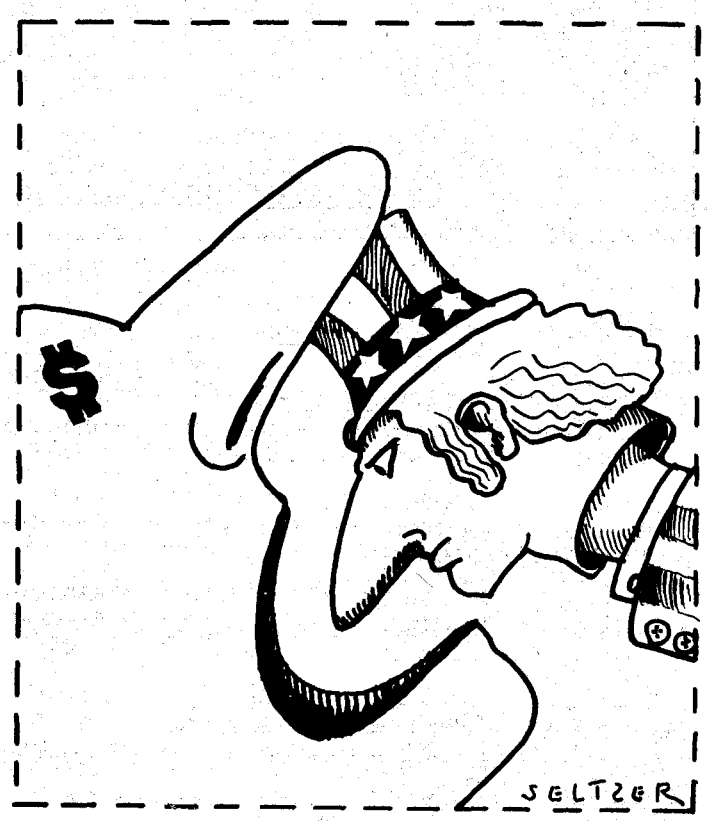
The speakers made sure that participants understood the possible dangers involved in opening a Swiss bank account. The Swiss experts explained how American citizens could move funds out of their country without triggering an audit by the Internal Revenue Service. Writing checks directly to a Swiss bank can be foolhardy, said Monika Gabrielli of Troy Associates. You might as well send a personal invitation to the I.R.S. to audit you. All U.S. checks over $1,000, said Zweidler, are photocopied by your bank and made available to the Treasury Department on request. Transporting cash can be risky too. Any amount over $10,000 must also be reported to the Treasury Department.

Several detours were proposed, however, for avoiding those requirements. A short paper distributed by Marsh detailed some of the possibilities: move cash in unequal amounts of under $10,000; use a cashier's check that does not require the name of the sender; or mail a personal check addressed to an officer of the foreign bank, without using the bank's name. Swiss bank officials will be glad to oblige if you go for the last of those options.

Another speaker illuminated other methods for disguising the ultimate destination of your funds. J.J. Magnin, an attorney from Geneva specializing in the establishment of corporations registered offshore, suggested setting up a foreign flag company in a tax haven like Panama or Liberia. Neither of those countries requires the auditing of a company's books or the filing of tax returns, so you can operate your business in almost total secrecy. Then, if you like, transfer the company's assets to Switzerland, where all accounts will appear in the company's name. Or, as Magnin advised, you can use an obscure device known as a Swiss-Liechtenstein Trust. Under the estate laws of the tiny country of Liechtenstein, the trust can be kept confidential.

Magnin stated that once funds are safely deposited in any of these innocuous sounding havens, they can be transferred anonymously to other banks or investment funds. Marsh, who has tax-free residency in the Bahamas, offered investment advice through his guidebook, *How to Invest Offshore Successfully*, which was sold discreetly at the conference. (For a $10,000 fee, Marsh will personally oversee your account.) As he puts it: "Many of the offshore funds won't accept American funds directly because the S.E.C. requests that they don't work with Americans, because they'll pay no taxes. . . . But there are ways to overcome the obstacles of these petty bureaucrats."

In the past two years, Marsh's petty bureaucrats—I.R.S. and S.E.C. auditors—have become more aggressive in pursuing financial investigations to Switzerland. As a result, Zweidler informed participants in his workshop on opening a Swiss bank account, many Swiss bankers including himself will not accept a new customer without a recommendation from a trusted client that his money is clean. This novel fastidiousness reflects the compromises forced on the Swiss banking system as a result of insider trading and other financial scandals. The 1977 Treaty on Mutual Assistance on Criminal Matters calls on Swiss banks to provide access to financial information for investigations of organized crime or of crimes committed abroad that are also considered crimes in Switzerland. Signed only after the United States threatened sanctions against Swiss products, like watches and cheese, the treaty was aimed at major tax fraud



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and money laundering by organized crime. Earlier this month, for example, the S.E.C. invoked the treaty to obtain information from a Swiss bank for its investigation into insider trading related to the merger of RCA and General Electric.

According to Michael Mann, chief of international enforcement for the S.E.C., numerous cases of securities fraud, including insider trading, nevertheless remain unresolved because of the commission's inability to meet the precise requirements of Swiss law. In a Catch-22 for U.S. investigators, the documents protected by Swiss secrecy laws are often the ones needed to prove that a crime has been committed in the first place. Although the Swiss government's decision to allow access to documents related to the prosecution of Levine set a precedent, the S.E.C. is still forced to obtain cooperation on a case-by-case basis. (The Swiss parliament, responding to U.S. pressure, is now about to pass legislation making insider trading a crime under Swiss law.)

The most comprehensive effort by the S.E.C. to institute a requirement that all foreign financial institutions waive their right to client confidentiality in return for the right to operate in U.S. markets was dropped early this year after widespread opposition from Swiss and European banks, as well as from the Reagan Administration. The Treasury Department also strongly opposed the measure, arguing that the requirement would constrain the Administration's efforts to "encourage the free flow of investment capital across national borders." Others registering objections to the proposal included the Interstate Commerce Commission, the New York Stock Exchange and the influential brokerage houses of Paine Webber and Merrill Lynch.

While the Treasury frets about "reducing unnecessary restraints" on foreign and international financial activities, the Internal Revenue Service worries about the uncollected taxes on $20 billion it claims is stashed by tax evaders and other criminals in offshore banks each year. In a letter to Congress in 1984, the commissioner of the I.R.S. wrote that in contrast to the days when the bulk of tax evasion cases involved faulty reporting of domestic assets, the I.R.S. is now "dealing with tax evasion on an international scale." The current trend, he said, is "to use secrecy laws of tax haven countries to facilitate tax evasion." The Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations reached a similar conclusion, observing in a study of offshore banks that tax havens—once the exclusive preserve of the super rich—are increasingly being exploited by "people one might regard as average American citizens." The Senate investigators established that Switzerland holds 75 percent of all expatriated U.S. funds.

Although clearly Githler is not aiming his seminars at white-collar criminals, he seems, with his financial summits, to have discovered a new mass market, advising average investors. As a result, several speakers and participants suspected that the I.R.S. and the S.E.C., the two agencies responsible for investigating schemes overtly advocating violations of U.S. financial laws, had sent spies to the conference in Lausanne. At least one participant refused to wear his badge for fear of being identified. The speakers were generally circumspect, encouraging participants to arrange private meetings with the Swiss representatives if they wanted personal advice on how to open an account.

This heightened scrutiny has made Swiss bankers defensive about their institutions' reputation as safe harbors for criminal funds. Camille Perusset, senior vice president of the Foreign Commerce Bank of Zurich and a speaker at the conference, commented, "We do not use the famous bank secrecy to protect criminals. It is used to protect the privacy of individual investors." Several participants stated adamantly that they were not there to seek shelter from the law or the taxman. As one participant in Zweidler's workshop put it, "It's not a question of illegal money. Every nickel was earned, every tax paid on that money. I'm just looking for a safer place with a small percentage increase over inflation."

A persistent theme throughout the Lausanne conference, however, was how to hide your money. One speaker, Jon Golding, a financial services consultant in London and the editor of *The Institutional Investor*, presented the latest in technology for investors: a portable telex and facsimile machine, complete with scrambler, to guarantee confidential communication. Golding admonished the conferees: "Americans are a trusting people. They leave things lying around, answer a lot of questions. They are not as oriented to security as we Europeans."

Despite the occasional outburst of nationalistic rhetoric, the impression remains that these players in the world of high finance retain little respect for national boundaries. Andre Sharon, a managing director of Simms Capital Management in New York, voiced the sentiment of many speakers when he said, "There has never been a better time to invest outside the United States." And new technological developments have made capital more mobile than ever, said Golding. From Tokyo to New York, the stock markets operate practically around the clock, while currency speculators make split-second purchases across the globe via high-speed computers. Keep your money in perpetual motion, Golding exhorted. In the end, it appeared that investors' loyalty to the dollar far outweighed their economic allegance to the nation that prints it.

It was ironic that the Internal Revenue Code Section 212 qualified the entire investors' conference, including travel, as a tax-deductible expense, to "maintain and improve professional skills." But before you contemplate a trip to next year's money fest, you may first want to check if Senator Robert Packwood's tax package, which would eliminate the deduction, is passed. If it is, according to Investment Seminars Inc. staff members, it would most likely make this year's Swiss investors' summit the last such event in Switzerland. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Corner of the Eye

DOUGLAS CRASE

TERMS TO BE MET. *By George Bradley. Yale University Press. 62 pp. $12.95. Paper $6.95.*

Voyager I was still closing in on Saturn when *The New York Times* wondered in an editorial what a poet would say, what Auden in particular would say, about the encounter. "We wonder—," wrote *The Times*, "and with due respect to all poets past, present, and to come—we don't. Because the words we've read in the news reports have the kind of poetry, the poetry of fact, that occasionally surpasses art."

It wasn't true, of course, about the words; but there was something to consider in this editorial all the same. I used to think only poets, and then only the nuttiest, most ambitious poets, actually took it as a matter of course that it was up to them to provide the tropes and metaphors we humans need to hook the new cosmology, to haul it home into the human memory. Yet here in the paper in 1980 was an opinion writer who, despite some mild bard-bashing, plainly assumed that the wide universe would inevitably get its poems. Since I believed then, and still do, that civilization requires a poetry to ratify Hubble and Heisenberg as much as Newton or Darwin or Galileo, I thought the writer's assumption was—well, touching.

All this came back to me when I was reading the newest volume in the Yale Series of Younger Poets, *Terms to Be Met*, by George Bradley. On its cover is a photograph of M31 in the Andromeda galaxy, and in the contents, poems called "Antimatter," "About Planck Time," "The Life of Stars"—enough to suggest that the author is one of those poets to come, already making our universe his enterprise. Except, as Bradley has decently acknowledged in his title, he has a problem: where once the poet of nature might have hoped to encounter facts, now there are mostly "terms" to be met instead.

Of course, writers have always faced our factual estrangement, the secondhand way the species has of knowing things by name. As a poet of the new cosmology, though, Bradley has a further problem in what we should think of as practical poetics. Emerson observed the distinctive shape of the Dumbbell Nebula in Vulpecula through an Alvan Clark refractor, one of the high-tech instruments of its time. Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, described features of the lunar landscape with such discovery that I like to think he inspected it himself, even through a telescope of Galileo's during his visit to the old astronomer in Fiesole in 1639. But George Bradley cannot see the features of a quark. If he went to the proton-antiproton collider at CERN, near Geneva, he could not see a quark. And he cannot inspect the features of a quasar. Even at the national observatory on Kitt Peak, or the Very Large Array of radio telescopes in New Mexico, he could expect only the grossest image of quasar morphology. Still he could not expect an eyes-on view: at Kitt Peak he would wait for the image to build up on emulsion or silicon; at the Very Large Array, for computer images to be mapped from radio wavelengths to which he is simply insensible.

Yet no one doubts any more that quasars (quarks too) are real, and the mind regards them with longing. Maybe they do represent the extremes in an explosion of scale that we can comprehend but never apprehend. No matter, the mind still longs to expand along with them, to be big enough to hold even one idea that will be valid, as Bradley puts it in his title poem, "through all extremity":

> And each of us clutches his own idea through all extremity,
> Though the landscape we find ourselves in isn't much support,
> The sky having somehow backed off a bit, gone farther away,
> Leaving us here, at the margins of the mind, where we must live.

To a long tradition of epistemological regret, this poet has added his more immediate lament. And if it is really true that the state of blessedness rests on the act of vision, which is what Beatrice told Dante, then Bradley has something to be sad about for sure. Like the rest of us, he lives in a cosmic precinct that scientists tell him is more immense and more measurable than anyone ever thought, and at the same time he is reduced to perceiving it by their terms, quasar, quark and worse—intermediate vector bosons and black holes.

Words like these compound the poet's troubles. If he or she tries to use them, they are likely to confound the poem, not because they are awkward, but because they are so proud. Worked up for a paper, invented for a conference, they are aimed to convince, awe or simply bludgeon the skeptical into agreement. They are words to make you remember exactly what a boson is and how it is different from a meson—and if you are remembering, said wise Gertrude Stein, that is what a masterpiece is not. They are also words used to display possession, of knowledge, of status, and it is maybe this usage that suggested to George Bradley the appealing remedy he has used against them. In *Terms to Be Met*, he demonstrates that one good way for a poet to meet such terms is to humble them, and to be humble about his possession of the cultural capital they stand for.

Humility is not a practice most people associate with poetry. *The Times*, in its Voyager editorial, clearly believed that when poets got hold of Saturn they would make it more "poetical." Many writers who popularize science likewise seem to believe that to excite an audience you have to embellish the science with "poetic" license. The astronomer Carl Sagan has been eager to emphasize how we all trace our roots to the dispersion of heavy elements from exploding stars, and before that to the fashioning of those elements by fusion within the stars, and then before that to the appearance of hydrogen and helium out of the precise mix of elementary particles that obtained at the first one-hundredth second of the Big Bang. All this Sagan summarizes when he calls us humans "starfolk." It is sophisticated in its way, just right for television. And yet, although it is perhaps exactly what the majority mean by poetic, it is difficult to hear this proud expression fitting into even a postmodern poem.

The irony is that it's the poet, not the scientist, who turns out to be more matter-of-fact. The first poem in Bradley's new book could not have been written without the standard model of cosmic evolution, the very one Sagan celebrates. "The composition of many par-

Douglas Crase is the author of The Revisionist *(Little, Brown).*

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ticulars/Held the broad promise of our beginning"—this is the abstracted way the poem begins. Welcome to the lecture, you say, only it's a lecturer who is well along in the poet's project of not quite remembering: that precise Big Bang ratio of a billion photons for every one nuclear particle has come back as just "particulars." As the poem ends, the almost clandestine terms suggest, but still don't quite remember, the settling into this planet of those elements that would twist themselves into starfolk:

> And so we were set down out of the sky
> According to the prescriptions of our beginning
> Into a difficult place, though we weren't particular.

The cosmology is there, though hardly on display. Its terms have been "humbled," just right for a poem though not nearly poetic enough for PBS.

In another way, however, this poem of Bradley's tallies perfectly with the expectations people have of poetry. It doesn't seem to be about what it seems to be about. Ostensibly, it's not about stellar evolution or anything like that, but about crossing the Verrazano Narrows Bridge. It also proceeds by a formal conceit meant to suggest a bridge, so it could even be "about" structure. James Merrill, who in his role as Yale Series judge selected this book, points out in his introduction how the end words enact "the little triumph of engineering" as they ascend toward midpoem and then descend in reverse order—you pass them like pylons on the way down. If you watch them, they divert you all the more from the subdued astrophysical terms in the background of the poem.

There will be scientists who wonder why anybody has to review their cosmology so indirectly. They should consider that poetry is conducted on a human scale, and think back to when scientific observation was scaled the same. Even today, if you are trying to find a faint star with the naked eye, you will be told to search for it indirectly, out of the corner of your eye. It works, too, because the rods at the outside of the retina are more light-sensitive than the cones in the center. The point is, something similar happens in looking at a poem: If I'm going to be convinced, it's because I read it there slantwise for myself, not because I had it pounded into me. So poets plan for the corner of your eye, and this is why they tell truth slant. It also explains their efforts to get you to look away from the main event. Think of *The Changing Light at Sandover*, Merrill's epic at the Ouija board, a board that serves to divert you from the *truly* outrageous project of the poem—writing an ethic for the cosmos that will be valid, as George Bradley may once have read it, "through all extremity."

But the unavoidable reason why contemporary science must inspire a poetics of indirection is still the practical one: you can't directly describe what you cannot see. The real surprise will come as poetry meets this problem in ways that might have appalled us when we were modernists. Young poets who haven't learned to hoot at the gaucheries of, say, the pathetic fallacy are apt to discover that the discredited techniques seem plausible once again. After all, if you can't even see the "plain and leafy fact" that Ruskin told you to describe, what's wrong with a pathetic fallacy? Or remember the scorn we were supposed to feel for poems that drew a moral? Then George Bradley's poems will be cause for wonder, because they thrive on allegory. They also flirt with the forbidden fallacy so successfully, as in a poem about our neighbor galaxy, "M31 in Andromeda," that Bradley seems to have invented a variant—the "galactic" fallacy:

> With the human talent of noticing much, explaining little,
> Stellar Body M31 was long remarked for an odd imbalance,
> Revolving in mysterious concert with its own dark motives.
> The hidden motivation turns out to be ourselves, our Milky Way.

What makes this different is that *human* pathos is not the main concern. The main event takes shape in the background:

> . . . an elegant ellipse,
> though why
> To turn in emptiness, in absence of light or any warmth,
> Should form anything is not easy to imagine, any more than why
> Our own thoughts and dreams should take shape out of darkness.

The reader can question the correspondences, but the moral of the story is incidental, because it is being established meanwhile that the galaxy in Andromeda is really there, as continuously part of the mental landscape as Kansas City or Monument Valley, as (among Bradley's other subjects) Galileo's abjuration or the Alexandria library on the day it will catch fire.

By reopening Ruskin, I am not trying to suggest that, because quarks are bound and quasars 15 billion light-years off, we must endure an onset of anthropomorphic black holes, of squalid moralizing. The civility, the Lucretian gravity, that characterize Bradley's lines in "M31 in Andromeda" demonstrate that we can look to postmodern poetry for its own high standards. Maybe it is now scientifically absurd to ask a poet to apprehend the "plain and leafy fact" direct, but we can still ask if his or her trick of indirection is acquainted with what we know from science to be true about the world. Yes, this is dangerously substantive. In unsubtle hands, inquisitorial. But it is just not enough to judge poems on their technical facility. In the long run we *expect* them to be well written; what distinguishes a poet, what makes us name her Bishop, him Stevens, is the poet's attitude.

Wallace Stevens thought a poet's attitude was itself an analogy, an analogy to mediate the reality not ourselves. I think he was right, and that we are permitted to judge attitudes just as we would judge any other analogies or tropes the poet uses to write a poem. Stevens also believed that the supreme virtue for a poet, in regard to how he or she fashions such an analogy, is humility—"because the humble," he wrote, "are those that move around the world with the love of the real in their hearts." Based on motion and love, this is no formula for meekness but for an active practice. As Bradley now employs it, knowingly or not, it is a formula for an active democracy of consideration: a kind of one fact-one vote respect for things that are real.

Most real things are still discovered on earth, or from it. For now, the poet's perspective will have to be planetary. But what an advance in perspective it already is. In *Terms to Be Met* there is a poem named for El Niño, according to which that climatic disturbance can be read as an allegory written by the planet itself. Read like this, the violence El Niño does to the earth corresponds to what is done by the human perturbations, economic and religious, that also distribute the wealth and the blessings, that also move things around because they have "tired of this world and begun to dream/Another dream of how this world should be." In contrast is the

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figure who presides over another poem, set in Assisi, a town "dedicated/To a man who managed to love what was around him." El Niño dreams of an ideal world, and his missionary dissatisfaction threatens to rupture the living cell of this one. In Assisi, the saint of Assisi has managed to dream of Assisi. You may find the attitude that draws such a contrast to be deeply conservative or radical: perhaps it will depend on whether your reference is the study of man or of the earth.

It is unfortunate, but the love of things as they are, on earth or in its real heavens, comes no easier for poets than for the rest of the species. In the seventeenth century, George Herbert wrote an unpleasant poem, his first "Vanity," that condemns astronomers (along with chemists and pearl divers) for preferring facts to faith. In the nineteenth century, Whitman stooped to an instant chestnut, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer," the burden of which is that he'd rather look in ignorance at his stars, thank you. Still another century after that, and Auden was doing just what Whitman did. In fact, the reason *The New York Times* speculated on how Auden would have reacted to the Saturn encounter was that he had reacted to the first moon landing with a poem even more disagreeable than Herbert's or Whitman's. "Unsmudged, thank God, my Moon still queens the Heavens"—that is what Auden wrote, if you can believe it. I wonder how far that truly differs from the sentiment of Vicki Frost, the plaintiff in a federal court in Hawkins County, Tennessee, who has complained that her rights are violated by a seventh-grade textbook that proposes her children consider themselves a part of nature. "Our children's imaginations must be bounded," said Vicki Frost. She might as effectively have said "unsmudged."

All four cases, Herbert's and Whitman's, Auden's and Vicki Frost's, reveal a preference for ignorant fancy over reality. The fourth case, Vicki Frost's, reveals why it matters. Poets and parents may wish themselves out of evolution, but somewhere is a boy or girl who will want to join it. Since no one knows the whereabouts of that boy or girl, our best bet as a species is to look after the probabilities that most favor the random achievement of what George Bradley calls a mind of "optimum content." It is our best bet, because:

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. . . although no one
Seriously believes it of himself, all of us are born
Equal to one another more than we know and equal
To little else, neither the love of women, held
In the tremulous hands like something fragile, nor
The love of language, words turned on the tongue;
And thus the poem arises out of a chance accumulation,
Out of a mind that perhaps achieved optimum content
Months or even years ago, say one morning in winter
When the sky was so blue and steam rose off the ocean
Into the other element of air.

What does poetry have to do with the evolving cosmological content of the human mind? Poetry does not occupy most minds for very long. But it gets them sometimes when they are in love or when they are in school, attentive moments in the life of a mind. Whitman said it when he had his wits about him: poems are the final applause of science. Maybe poets don't legislate, but when the mind is prepared it may hear how the poet applauds. He claps, she claps—the poets ratify. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

The Vital Gesture: Franz Kline in Retrospect

An artist I admire often says how much she loves to create. "Creating," as an intransitive verb, is synonymous in her vocabulary with what defines her as an artist, namely painting and drawing; and it refers, beyond that, to the pleasure she takes in surprising herself, when forms and images that she had not especially anticipated materialize at the ends of her fingers. This is a valid enough use of the term, even if in danger of debasement by the California ideolect that enables people to be creative through salad making or moped repair. But it is not the deep sense of creativity that has to do, rather, with breakthroughs in art that resemble great discoveries in science. I have in mind those saving moments in the creative life that come rarely and to very few, when it is as though a dark glass had shattered or a blank wall had fallen, and the person to whom this happens enters, abruptly, onto fresh artistic or cognitive territory, his or her energy augmented, secure in the knowledge of having been graced. This experience bears only the palest resemblance to the day-to-day creativity available to all except those condemned to labor of the most mechanical or routine order.

The closest the ordinary lives of men and women come to such moments, I suppose, is when we are touched by love. We do not expect *l'amour fou* to happen to us over and over again, just because it so profoundly alters reality for us when it happens and it is perhaps beyond rational expectation that we should be given new world after new world in this way. Deep, transformative love comes once or twice to a life and contrasts with the succession of relationships, of amatory encounters, of affectionate liaisons and sexual affairs that knit up the fabric of emotional existence. My artist indeed had her moment of creation, when she accidentally hit upon a subject that precipitated a stylistic response that was uniquely hers, making her work thereafter unmistakable and autographic. It lifted her above the common run of gifted, competent, trained and disciplined artists who make art and have shows and hold down jobs that enable them to be creative in the harmless, unexalted sense of that term. It was a creative moment for her, but it was not, I think it fair to say, a creative moment for the history of art, for she was situated at some wrong juncture for the transformation in her to be a transformation of art itself. It was not the sort of discovery that puts art on a new course or enables other artists to make their own breakthroughs within a new framework.

Historical breakthroughs are of two sorts, instrumental and personal. The instrumental breakthrough makes it possible for artists to achieve goals they were in some measure able to pursue before, though not as effectively. These are the sorts of discoveries that could in principle be kept secret, like recipes, or handed down to apprentices, giving them a competitive edge in securing commissions. But sometimes, as with perspective or chiaroscuro, the new technique is so apparent as to be there for the taking. Such discoveries are sufficiently in the public domain that those who use them do not bear the stigma of being mere imitators. The discovery of abstraction by Kandinsky, for example, effected a certain opening for artists eager to be liberated from representation, without it being thought that their work was derivative of his. The discovery of Cubism may also have been of this order, since it seemed to promise a whole new way of construing space and form; Picasso and Braque were not imitating each other, even if it takes expert knowledge to tell their early Cubist works apart. Pollock's discovery of the drip lies on the borderline, for while Pollock did "break the ice," as de Kooning said, opening up new possibilities of gesture and abstraction, he simultaneously created a personal style so marked that those who wished to exploit his technique were obliged to find their own way of doing so, or be mimickers. Artists who became both abstract and expressionist were deemed no less original for having built upon the breakthroughs of Kandinsky and Pollock. So de Kooning and Kline and Motherwell developed personal idioms so clearly theirs that the use of them by others was a form of impersonation.

There are two moments in the career of Franz Kline that enable us to make the distinction between instrumental and personal artistic discoveries more vivid. The first was when he became an abstractionist; the second was when he became Franz Kline. There is some controversy as to whether Kline went abstract all at once or whether abstraction came gradually into his work, and the fact that this cannot be settled suggests it was the kind of decision one makes in joining a party or getting involved with someone or entering a profession. One weighs the pros and cons, and one's resolution weakens or strengthens. The decision must have been particularly difficult for Kline—who enjoyed and was good at hitting off likenesses and derived a certain pleasure from pleasing and entertaining others by doing so—especially since his early abstractions were not so marvelous as to justify the shift. Kline claimed that *The Dancer*, of 1946, was his first abstract painting, but whatever agony he may have gone through in forsaking representation is hardly redeemed by the result. *The Dancer* is muddy and opaque, dimly Cubistic and somewhat halfhearted: there is a recognizable slipper attached to what must be a leg, and a triangular form in the upper right that is then read as a bent arm. The horizontal stripes must imply motion, much in the way

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the circular lines a cartoonist puts around a figure inform us that it is rotating. Reality is not far away, and had Kline persisted in abstraction at that tentative level, however personally momentous it may have been for him to do so, he would have remained one of the obscurer members of the abstractionist tribe, much as, before then, he had been a modestly capable practitioner of 1940s-style representationalism. All that set him apart was a certain unusual draughtsmanly talent.

But then, at a certain moment in 1948 or 1949, described for us in a famous passage of Elaine de Kooning's, Kline became Kline in a way so immediate and unpremeditated that the concept of decision has no application. The force that effected the change came from without, and was grasped with the certitude of a mystical revelation. Kline could have changed his name at that point, as Saint Paul did, so slight was the continuity between the new Kline and the old. It can be argued that this particular revelation could have been granted only to someone who had had specifically the life in art that Kline had had up to the shattering self-disclosure, but it can also be argued that had it not been for an almost entirely accidental intervention, like a fate, Kline would simply have gone on as he had been. It was a moment like the falling of the apple in the myth of Newton, or the fluorescence of a nearby barium screen in the case of Röntgen, or the flames the dozing Kekulé saw as interlocked snakes when he got the idea of the benzene ring. Or like Proust's tasting of the madeleine, without which he would have remained the marginally distinguished *belle époque* writer of the works that preceded *Remembrance of Things Past.*

Kline's transfigurative experience came when he saw some of his drawings projected on the wall of de Kooning's Fourth Avenue studio in late 1948. De Kooning had got hold of a Bell-Opticon opaque projector for a few days, and when Kline saw his drawing there, on that scale, it was, in Elaine de Kooning's phrase, "total and instantaneous conversion." The projector is today a standard item in the artist's instrumentarium, especially since physical bigness has become a presupposition of painterly significance. It replaced the grid, the *mise en carré* painters had used for centuries in translating a small sketch onto a large area. Bigness of that order was quite new for the New York painters of the 1940s, who thought, Meyer Schapiro once told me, that they might as well paint big, since they had the space for it and nobody was going to buy the work in any case. It was as though they were adapting the large format of the public commission, the mural, to the most personal art imaginable. Kline's work up to that point, aside from a hometown commission and some barroom murals, had been of standard easel proportions, including the abstractions. But he must have seen at that moment, with the intuition of genius, the expressive power of size. Most of us pay little attention to the fact that what we see projected on the wall or screen is a vast enlargement of an image, mainly because we see enlargement as a means for making the image more perspicuous. The image, in our era of reproduction, is an invariant which may appear in black and white or in color, or be smaller than the original, as in an art book, or larger than the original, as in an art history lecture. Scale is rendered invisible by the variety of sizes in which we may see the same work in the various modes of its transcription. But for Kline, at that instant, scale became palpable and crucial, as if the drawing were not so much reproduced and projected as magically transformed and gigantified. The energized squiggle on a scrap of cheap paper—perhaps a sheet from the telephone directory—was metamorphosed into something immense and sublime.

Heidegger once introduced a fascinating concept to which he attached the term *Zeugganzes*, which means, roughly, "a complex of tools." Any item in such a complex implies the other tools, without whose existence the item itself would not exist. Thus the hammer refers to the nail, the nail to the board, the board to the stud, the stud to the beam. A *Zeugganzes* comes into being all at once and, when technology changes, goes into obsolescence as a totality. Think of the forge, the hammer, the anvil and the tongs of the blacksmith's shop. An anvil would never have existed save as part of such a *Zeugganzes*. Now there is, I believe, an artistic counterpart to this. The moment Kline recognized the place of scale in the transformation of his drawings, everything had to come at once—the wide house-painting brush to lay down the lines with a single gesture, the large containers of fluid pigment to give the

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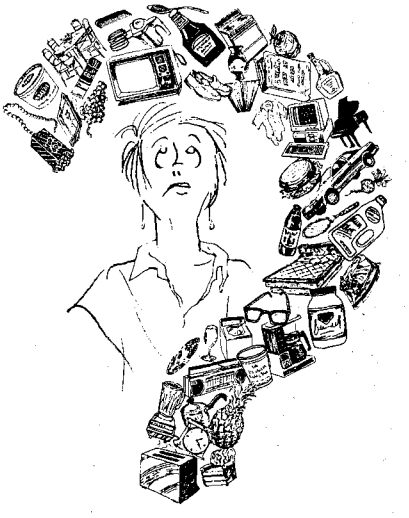

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liquidity of ink, the buckets of white paint and black paint to get the light-dark contrast of the drawing, the abandonment of the easel in favor of the wall, which in turn altered the painter's touch and changed his posture, as he swung the loaded brush across an ample surface rather than drew a line bent over a drawing table. The Franz Kline painting followed with nearly logical necessity. The artist himself is part of the *Zeugganzes* of his art: when everything else changed, he changed. Kline became a great painter.

Like divine grace, artistic grace seems fortuitous and arbitrary, missing those who seem most to deserve it and touching those whose gifts and comportment seem not especially to have destined them for exaltation. I find it terribly moving that Kline should have set out to be a cartoonist, like someone who sees an advertisement in a matchbook and imagines fame and fortune. Judith Stein, the organizing curator of the Kline exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, told me that Kline's hero had been the cartoonist John Held Jr. Held's swanky drawings of flappers and college boys gave graphic embodiment to the ethos of *This Side of Paradise*, and his world of fast cars and dizzy girls, toothy boys in smart clothes and patent-leather hair, jazzy music and highballs, had great appeal for Franz, as even those who never knew him like to call him. Franz was sexy, good-looking, and liked a fun time. His models, when an art student, were illustrators like Phil May or Charles Keene of *Punch*. He always drew fluently and incisively, and drawing was the avenue through which grace reached him when he saw, projected on the wall and turned into something monumental, what he did best and most spontaneously. Drawing was the matrix of his work through the dozen years of greatness that remained to him before his death, at the sad age of 51, of a rheumatic heart.

Drawing is notoriously difficult to define, but two properties of drawing on paper must account for its attractiveness to artists. The background color of the paper confers an instant unity on the drawing, and the line interacts with the medium of the paper to create an astonishing difference between solidity and transparency. Draw a face on a piece of paper, and everything enclosed by the line becomes solid while everything outside it dissipates as atmosphere, though the color and texture of the paper are the same on both sides of the line. You have to work very hard to achieve this effect in painting. But Kline transformed black and white paint to transfer the properties of drawing to his work. When it was first shown, critics thought of it as calligraphic, a not inexcusable suggestion, given the depth to which Zen concepts and attitudes had at that time penetrated artistic consciousness in New York. Kline nevertheless rightly denied that he was writing, and one may confirm his position by considering the distinction between drawing and writing in Chinese watercolors. The calligraphy remains on the surface, the drawing goes into the space of the paper; the writing cannot but be two-dimensional as the drawing cannot but be three-dimensional. The same touch is present in the writing as in the drawing, but why the one creates solidity—or mistiness, as in the Sung—while the other simply defines a meaning, as in a text, is a beautiful problem for the perceptual psychologist. The difference survives the abandonment of monochrome: the red

THE HAWK'S SHADOW

Got to push on. Snowy trail,
Snowfield ahead and around,
The time, what, two in the afternoon,

I'm not wearing a watch and I can't tell,
I'd guess the tree line half an hour below,
Down there where pines drop grit

As on a city windowsill.
Since morning I have lifted myself up
Bit by bit over scum

To where the planet's sculpture suddenly
Is lotus burning white in all directions,
Or something set me here. Now it's a question

Of the endocrine system, that is euphoric,
And can believe the universe wants us
To the degree we want ourselves,

Versus the sullen
Muscles, union labor,
Haters of the beautiful.

Weather an unpredictable factor.
Cloudless now, later it may snow,
Filling old cleatmarks, it and I may fall.

Over these switchbacks, the sky, like a genius,
Discovers new depths in itself each minute,
And frightens me, treachery

Dancing in those blue wells,
Able to crystallize and kill
Me very easily.

And can I like being so
Endangered and alone? Ah, mama,
What seems grimace is a pure smile.

Things are alive here.
There is a hawk above the icy crest
And there is the hawk's shadow.

Alicia Ostriker

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seal occupies the surface, the red maple leaves go back in space, though it be the same red in each. Even when Kline introduced color, as he did masterfully and effectively at a time when people thought of him as only black-and-white, his work derived its power from the power of the drawn image. Of course the matter is more complicated than that, because we are also aware of the quality of the brushing, as of the glaze and sweet softness of the pigment.

Harry Gaugh, guest curator of the show and a leading Kline expert, contends that this is likely to be the last full-scale retrospective Kline will be given in our lifetime. For all their power, the paintings are physically fragile, like drawings. This is due to the poor quality of the materials the artist used, as dictated at first by poverty and then by the exigency of the *Zeugganzes*. Having to squeeze paint from tubes interposes an obstacle that has to be overcome when one paints like Kline. The exhibition gives the three moments or stages of Kline's career: the early figurative work, the limited abstractions and the inspired Klines. As you mount the elegant stairway of the Academy, two marvelous Klines, hung against piers of the central rotunda, draw you on. Two more magnificent, internally related canvases, *Siegfried* and *Requiem*, great late works hung on the opposing piers, see you out. On your right the galleries show the early work, on your left, as you enter, the triumphant grandeur of the later work. It is a wonderful show, and a wonderful way to say hello and goodbye to Franz. You can see it in Philadelphia until September 28. □

MUSIC.

BILLY ALTMAN

I must confess that I approached Bob Dylan's concert at Madison Square Garden last month with equal degrees of curiosity and wariness. My curiosity stemmed from the fact that for his first full-scale American tour since 1978 Dylan was utilizing the services of the mainstream rock band Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, a maneuver that seemed to underscore the impression left by his last albums, *Infidels* and *Empire Burlesque*, and confirmed in the brand-new one, *Knocked Out Loaded*, that Dylan is trying to work his way back to the rock audience he "deserted" for his strangely aggressive brand of gospel music in the late 1970s.

The question of why he was returning to rock was where my wariness about his live performance met my curiosity head on. Although Dylan's new record features only two tracks that contain any explicit religious overtones (and they aren't even originals; "Precious Memories" is a traditional hymn while "They Killed Him" was written by Kris Kristofferson), there is really no focus to the album, which is, overall, little more than a haphazard collection of decidedly minor songs. True, the collaboration here with playwright Sam Shepard may have seemed a potentially important one, but the result, "Brownsville Girl," is a ballad so thoroughly lacking in musical and narrative drama that it just trudges along without making much of an impact, for no less than eleven minutes. And that's the record's centerpiece. In fact, it's really only at its most off-the-cuff moments, such as the bluesy "You Wanna Ramble" (helped noticeably by guitarist T. Bone Burnett's smoking lead work) or the Bo Diddley-style "Got My Mind Made Up" (the lone song to feature Petty and his whole group, who sound quite inspired), that the album shows any bite. So the questions remained: Why a nationwide tour? Why with Petty's band? And why now?

Watching Dylan's July 15 show at the Garden, I not only found the answers to those questions but was bowled over by a performance for which I was totally unprepared. To begin with, there was Dylan taking center stage in denim jacket, leather pants and black boots, his Fender Stratocaster slung over his shoulder, as if it were 1966 again and *Highway 61 Revisited* was his latest release. And by the second number, an altogether explosive version of "Positively Fourth Street," Dylan's kiss-off song to the folk purists who deserted him when he turned to rock 'n' roll, it *was* 1966. By the time the almost three-hour program had ended, Dylan had checked in at virtually every stop along his twenty-five-year musical odyssey—from early sixties folk (an acoustic set that featured "The Times They Are A-Changin'" and "One Too Many

Billy Altman has written about music in Rolling Stone, Esquire, The Village Voice *and elsewhere.*

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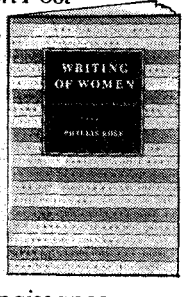

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Mornings") to early seventies country (the riveting "Knockin' On Heaven's Door") to mid-sixties hard rock ("Like a Rolling Stone" and "Ballad of a Thin Man") to mid-eighties hard gospel ("When the Night Comes Falling From the Sky"). And he had done so with an apparent equality of commitment to, and respect for, each of those phases that was both unexpected and revealing.

I say this because Dylan has turned to his back pages at several points in his career, but never in quite this fashion. His 1974 tour with The Band (captured on *Before the Flood*) concentrated almost exclusively on 1960s material and carried with it a distinct sense of finality, mainly because it represented the official end of Dylan's working relationship with the backup group he had used throughout his heaviest rock period. The 1978 tour, which resulted in the *Bob Dylan at Budokan* double-album, saw Dylan contemptuously trashing his classic compositions with arrangements that were either heavy-handed or careless—as if such achievements as "Like a Rolling Stone," "It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)" and "Just Like a Woman" were just so many albatrosses around his neck.

With this in mind, it's significant that Dylan ended his country-rock phase after his 1974 tour (his very next album was the highly acclaimed, return-to-folk *Blood on the Tracks*) and that the self-loathing which seemed about to consume him in 1978 was followed by *Slow Train Coming*, which marked the beginning of his turn to religiously oriented music. One is therefore inclined to suspect that this 1986 tour is not without purpose. What I found so revealing about the Garden concert was that, with the excellent support of Petty's band (as well as his four backup vocalists), Dylan seemed finally to be tying together all the various facets of his remarkably complex musical personality in a way that has indeed brought it all back home. I can't recall ever having seen him as relaxed and, yes, *happy* onstage, and I've seen him in numerous incarnations over the past twenty-odd years. It's as if he's stared right into the heart of all the warring factions of his art and emerged at peace with himself. It's all just process, he seems to be saying to those who would argue that he's been in decline as a songwriter during the last decade. And it all has its value to me, the artist who's here for the long haul.

In a recent interview in *Rolling Stone*, Dylan explained to Mikal Gilmore that it's both difficult and futile for an artist to attempt to rate his own work:

> Sometimes I think about people like John Lee Hooker or Muddy Waters—these people who played into their 60s. If I'm here at 80, I'll be doing the same thing. This is all I want to do—all I *can* do. . . . All these people who say whatever it is I'm supposed to be doing—that's all gonna pass, because, obviously, I'm not gonna be around forever. That day's gonna come when there aren't gonna be any more records, and then people won't be able to say, "Well *this* one's not as good as the last one." They're gonna have to look at it all. And I don't know what the picture will be.

I don't know, either. Perhaps a song or two off of *Knocked Out Loaded* will eventually establish themselves in my mind as "good" Dylan songs. After all, his ferocious live versions of "Shot of Love" and "When the Night Comes Falling From the Sky" showed this listener a thing or two about snap judgments. Each was a song I had dismissed on a first hearing, and each is a song I've now gone back to, hat in hand. You just don't count out the kind of artist who, in the early 1970s, after having already been responsible for more pieces of lasting music than any other single songwriter of his generation, wrote a line saying "Someday, everything is gonna sound like a rhapsody—when I paint my masterpiece." □

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 162*)

as a result of her perseverance, cartoons that had lain in storage for fifty years were discovered. Although many helped put this magnificent show together, Downs should be given the fullest credit for her initiative, fortitude and devotion to the life and work of this great artist. *Mildred Jeffrey*

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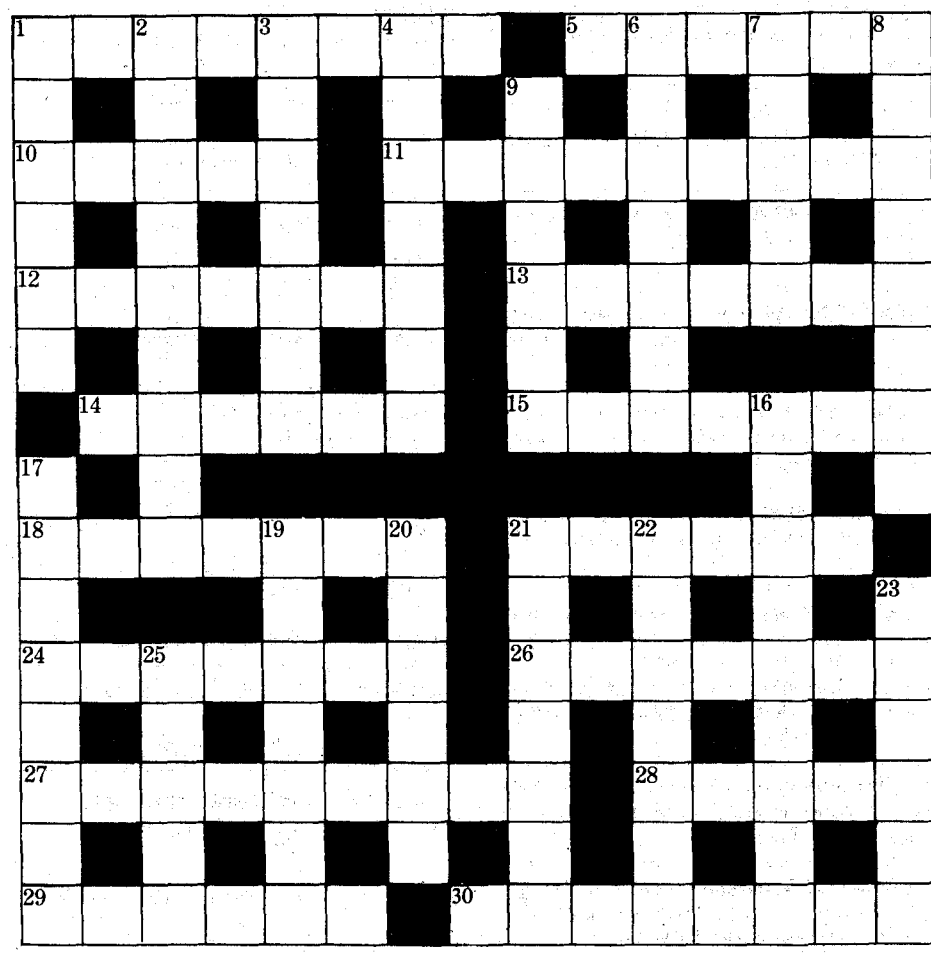
A	■	A	■	H	■	A	■	R	■	V	■	L	■	I
I	S	S	U	E	■	R	A	I	S	E	C	A	I	N
R	■	T	■	D	■	L	■	N	■	R	■	N	■	N
Y	A	R	D	S	T	I	C	K	■	S	I	D	L	E
■	■	I	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	I	■	■	■	R
G	O	T	H	S	■	E	C	O	N	O	M	I	C	S
O	■	E	■	A	■	S	■	D	■	N	■	N	■	E
D	I	S	M	I	S	S	E	D	■	S	H	O	R	T
M	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	N	■	■
O	R	B	I	T	■	S	Q	U	A	T	T	E	R	S
T	■	U	■	J	■	O	■	M	■	R	■	W	■	I
H	A	N	S	O	M	C	A	B	■	A	L	O	N	G
E	■	N	■	A	■	K	■	E	■	I	■	R	■	N
R	A	Y	O	N	■	S	E	R	E	N	A	D	E	S

PUZZLERS' PARTY

Meet Frank W. Lewis at *The Nation* on September 9. For details call Nancy Bacher at (212) 242-8400.

Crossword Puzzle No. 2115

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 5 Señor Guevara's compensation for services goes with what the photographer might want to hear. (A tasty morsel indeed!) (8,6)
10 Nothing in "Stardust" might be combined with 25 down to make a somersault difficult. (Might go to pot, too!) (5)
11 Was he responsible for one with a cavalier attitude, and an amused expression? (5,4)
12 Animals or old war engines or oranges, perhaps. (7)
13 If you find the chase erotic when the wise guy goes out, you'll see it's rather disorderly. (7)
14 A reputed popper when you and I become associated with the Broken Seal. (6)
15 Where some do a lot of talking and the bad sort drink. (7)
18 We now usually speak of it as a sort of sub—but one author might put a lot of work in it. (7)
21 March for the boys was preceded by three—but they might not work very often. (6)
24 A cross word for the old Turk, when the soil is tilled, and one comes inside. (7)
26 Had nice form, for such an unusual mammal. (7)
27 Will temperament, no matter how unchanged, show a streak of meanness? (3,6)
28 Is a bit of sun still around in such a day . . . (5)
29 . . . around this time, possibly? (6)
30 One who was caught in the fire has a place to sleep, but has finally gone bad. (8)

DOWN

1 and 17 In short, it looks like a little company might be dangerous! (Exhaust one source of it, however.) (6,8)
2 The scene of British victory goes from the Spanish to the French before allowing me to get in. (2,7)
3 Are they mad because the star is in disguise? (7)
4 Some hesitant buyers still want the first one. (In a real environment, you start fussing!) (7)
6 In a way, the U.S.S.R. has such troops pretty well hidden! (7)
7 Demand something, to be precise. (5)
8 and 23 Implying simple arrivals and departures are common for casual shoppers. (4,4,4,2)
9 Disease associated with 21 down. (7)
16 Is the heat put on in a hurry with such, or does it only imply a fast round? (5,4)
17 See 1 down
19 One could have been confused about a Buddhist sect, but one could still get solvent this way. (7)
20 Does it imply the little devil is up above? (Lacking in size, obviously!) (6)
21 The complainer, as one might say—or a sign of such. (3,4)
22 Put two and two together around this place, and you might get stuck! (6)
23 See 8
25 One of these might go on foot, but they once packed a lot! (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

X-523

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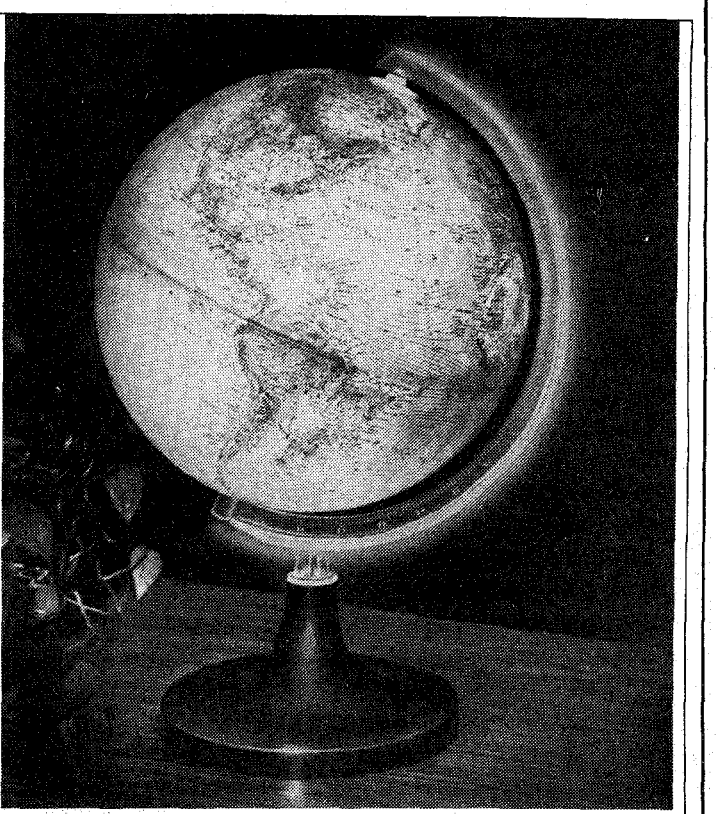

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